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English Men of Action

DUNDONALD

THE EARL OF DUNDONALD

After the Picture by STROEHLING

Ecol 9

DUNDONALD

Cochrane, Thomas

BY THE

Hon. J. W. FORTESCUE

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CHAPTER I

ANCESTRY—BIRTH—BOYHOOD—ENTRANCE INTO THE NAVY

1775–1793

"TRADITION," says Lord Dundonald in his Autobiography, "has assigned to the Cochranes a derivation from one of the Scandinavian sea-rovers who, in a remote age, settled in the lands of Renfrew and Ayr." With such a tradition the biographer of a great sea-king will feel little disposed to quarrel. Nevertheless for authentic record one must needs wait until the year 1262, when the name of Waldenne de Coveran first struggles into light among the tale of witnesses to an ancient deed. A grant of King Robert the Second dated 1389, confirming to William de Cochrane the lands of Cochrane in Renfrewshire, to be held by him as by his progenitors, gives sufficient proof of the antiquity of the family and of the origin of its name.

Robert Cochrane, grandson of this William, was the first of his clan to win a place in history. He appears in the year 1456 to have resigned his estates to his son, and to have betaken himself to the study and practice of architecture, in which art he is said to have displayed

no little skill. He was, however, not less distinguished for uncommon boldness and great physical strength; and having become known to King James the Third through some duel in which he had been engaged, he was invited to the Court, where he showed that talent as an architect was not incompatible with diligence and ability as a courtier. In a short time he rose to be the King's chief adviser, and was rewarded with the Earldom of Mar, an accession of dignity which gave deep offence to the old Scottish nobles. Cochrane, however, was high-handed and defiant; he slighted the great lords on all occasions, reserved his patronage for his own adherents, and flaunted his great station in the face of the nobility by sumptuous magnificence. Such a career could have but one end. The Court being assembled at Lauder, the Scottish peers met in secret conclave one morning in the church, and took their decision. On the same afternoon Cochrane too went down in great state to the church to attend the Council. He knocked and was admitted. Forthwith the Earl of Angus advanced to him, and plucked his gold chain from his neck, saying, "A rope will become thee better." Others of the peers offered no less ominous insults. "My lords," said the astonished Cochrane, "is it jest or earnest?" "It is earnest, and so thou shalt find it," was the reply; and with that the King's favourite was straightway haled to Lauder Bridge. The dead bodies of his chief followers already hanging thereon told him sufficiently the fate that awaited him, but he showed no fear; he asked only that, as became his rank, he might be hanged with one of the silken cords of his own pavilion. The petition was refused. Rope was scarce; but a

hundred bridle reins were offered for the service, so bitter was the feeling against him; and presently his body also swung over Lauder Bridge. So died the first eminent man of the Cochranes.

Five generations later the descendants of this Robert were reduced to a single heiress, for whom her father made a "prudent and discreet" match with a cadet of the Blairs of that ilk. The choice was a good one, for Alexander Blair took to himself not only the name of Cochrane, but a Cochrane's zeal for the welfare of the family, which he now started afresh with a progeny of seven sons and two daughters. Of these seven sons six were fighting men, all (for we are now arrived at the Civil War) in the service of King Charles the First. One, indeed, had learnt his trade under a great captain admired of all Englishmen, Gustavus Adolphus, before he drew sword against his own countrymen. As might be expected, the family gained little by its loyalty to the Stuarts. The title of Lord Cochrane of Cowden was indeed granted to the second son and heir presumptive in 1641, and supplemented in 1647 (only a few months before the end) by the further dignity of Baron Cochrane of Dundonald. But between loans to Charles Stuart and fines to Oliver Cromwell the Cochranes paid heavily to both sides for their part in the Civil War.

After the Restoration Lord Cochrane was sworn a Privy Councillor, and by other favours was enabled to set his affairs once more in order, and even to acquire additional wealth. He was evidently a man of integrity and of capacity for business, qualities which gained for him the management of the Scotch estates of the Duke

of Monmouth. We recognise the character of Alexander Blair, the prudent and discreet, in Lord Cochrane's advice to Monmouth to refrain from signing anything but what should be most maturely advised by himself. In 1667 Lord Cochrane was advanced to be Earl of Dundonald, and prosperity seemed to be assured to the family. But it was not to be. In 1683 the Earl's second son John was discovered to be in complicity with the Rye House Plot, and was compelled to fly for his life to Holland, whence he returned but two years later to take part in a still more desperate venture, the insurrection of Argyll. He was of course taken prisoner, and led with every degradation by the hangman through the streets of Edinburgh; but a large bribe from his father to the priests of James the Second had efficacy to save his life. The old Earl died in the following year (1686); but the son lived on, and after the Revolution seems even to have lived in peace. It is from this same John, the turbulent, dissatisfied Whig, that the subject of this memoir traces his descent.

The first line of the Cochranes came to an end with the death of Archibald, seventh Earl, who was killed at the siege of Louisburg, in a sortie made by a drunken party of the garrison on July 9th, 1758. His successor, Thomas, eighth Earl, grandson of the rebellious John, likewise began life in the army, but retired with no higher rank than that of major. Twice married, he was the father of fifteen children, of whom many died in infancy, and but five require to be named here: Archibald, ninth Earl, the father of the famous Dundonald; Charles, a colonel in the army and aide-de-

camp to Lord Cornwallis, who was killed at Yorktown in 1781; Basil, a civil servant of the East India Company; Alexander Forrester, the distinguished admiral and Knight of the Bath; and lastly, Andrew, who subsequently added the name of Johnstone to his own patronymic, a colonel in the army, who threw up the service in disgust and became Member of Parliament for Grampound. With all of these, excepting the second, we shall meet again. The last two, Alexander and Andrew, were the men who wrought most to make and to mar the life of their famous nephew.

Archibald, the ninth Earl, was born in 1748. Obedient to the traditions of his race he, too, entered the army, becoming at the age of sixteen a cornet in the Third Dragoons, but, forsaking this career, turned to the sister service, wherein he remained long enough only to become an acting-lieutenant. A cruise on the west coast of Africa bred in him a dislike for the profession, which not only caused his own retirement, but went near to deprive England of one of her greatest naval officers. In truth Archibald was not designed for the profession of arms. His bent lay towards natural science, in which province he was sufficiently an adept to hold intimate communication with such men as Cavendish, Priestley, and Watts, and even to make valuable discoveries on his own account. In his way he was a man of genius, but genius of the disastrous kind that knows not its own limitations; one of those men, in fact, on whom the doors of their laboratory, library, studio, or workshop should be kept permanently closed, giants within their walls, but babes without.

In October, 1774, Archibald married Anna, daughter

of Captain Gilchrist of the Royal Navy, a distinguished officer who in 1758 had been the hero of a remarkably brilliant frigate-action; and on December 14th, 1775, was born at Annsfield, Lanarkshire, their first child, Thomas, whose name as Lord Cochrane was destined to fill so large a place in the world. The boy's early years must have been curious enough. The family estates, through loans to one generation of Stuarts and fines to another, had been sadly impoverished. Lord Dundonald, however, was in the full blast of scientific discovery; and seeing therein, as he fancied, the means of restoring the fallen fortunes of his race, he leaped with one bound from scientific to mercantile speculation, and established manufactories wherein the result of his researches should be practically applied. Extraction of soda from common salt, improved production of alumina, preparation of British gum as a substitute for gum Senegal, manufacture of sal ammoniac and of white lead, distillation of tar from coal,—such were the ventures, all simultaneously pursued, and all on a ruinous scale compared with his means, whereby Archibald, ninth Earl, sought to recall prosperity to his house. They could have but one result. One can picture few spectacles more sad than this of the gifted enthusiast, plunging deeper and deeper into the mire which was to engulf him,—the sanguine expectations of husband and wife, the stories told to little Tom of a father who was the cleverest man in the world, and would be the richest man in the world some day; and yet with every year the reduction of comfort, the accumulation of embarrassment, the father's indignation against the stupidity of his fellows, and the mother's sickening anxiety for her

born and unborn children. Swiftly the patrimony of the Cochranes melted away, and regularly every year came a new baby Cochrane into the world to share it. In 1782, when Thomas Cochrane was seven years old, Lord Dundonald moved to his estate at Culross Abbey, in order the better to superintend the distillation of coal-tar in his own collieries. While there he accidentally made the one discovery which might have retrieved his fortune, that, namely, of the illuminative power of coal-gas; but, though generally keen to seize a new fact, he failed to grasp the significance of this, and was never a jot the richer for it.

In 1784 Lady Dundonald died, a heavy misfortune for the four little boys who alone of her seven children survived her. They were now of an age to require education; but the family means were unequal to the burden, and but for the devotion of their grandmother, Mrs. Gilchrist, who set apart a portion of her own small income for the purpose, they would have received scant teaching. Through her aid two tutors, one British and one French, were duly obtained; but with small result. The first knew little of his business; and the second, who was a Catholic, got into trouble with the Kirk and with his neighbours through firing a gun at some cherry stealing magpies on the Sabbath. From the Kirk Lord Dundonald protected this tutor, but from general ill-feeling he could not shield him; and the poor Frenchman was compelled to abandon his charge before the boys had learned even the rudiments of French. The course even of this imperfect education was broken off for Thomas Cochrane by his father, who insisted on taking him with him to London, where he hoped to push

the sale of his coal-tar. On the way they paid a visit to James Watt at Handsworth, where the boy heard a long discussion on the newly-discovered inflammability of coal-gas. Arrived in London, father and son went together to various shipbuilding yards to show forth the merits of coal-tar as a protection for ships' bottoms against the ravages of the worm (*teredo navalis*). Great as those merits undoubtedly were before the days of copper-sheathing, neither the Admiralty nor the trade would hear of them. "My Lord," said one shipbuilder, "we live by repairing ships as well as building them; and the worm is our best friend. Sooner than use your preparation I would cover ships' bottoms with honey to attract worms."

Ruined and disappointed Lord Dundonald for the moment abandoned his darling inventions, and turned to his eldest son. The boy's natural inclination leaned strongly to the navy; but his father, having a kinsman of influence at the Horse Guards, had already destined him for the army, and now managed to procure for him a commission in the Hundred-and-Fourth Foot. Then came a course of discipline which reminds us of the training of Frederick the Great. Young Cochrane was placed in charge of an old sergeant, who was specially ordered to pay no attention to his whims. The boy's hair was cut, plastered with tallow and flour, and trained into a queue after the fashion of the barrack-yard; his neck was buckled into a tight leather stock, and his body encased in a pseudo-regimental suit, a costume designed apparently as a sartorial summary of the parental opinions. The coat was blue with scarlet collar and cuffs, similar to the

Windsor uniform and therefore emblematic of loyalty; but lest loyalty should be carried too far, the royal colours yielded place in the waistcoat and breeches to an uncompromising Whig yellow; of which hue (as a final touch of exquisite cruelty) the boy was charged to be never ashamed. Small wonder that a proud and sensitive youth conceived a loathing for the profession which his father had identified with such a garb. One day, after enduring the agonies of outspoken criticism on his appearance from a mob of street boys at Charing Cross, he rushed home and entreated his father with tears to release him from the pigtail and yellow breeches, and send him to sea with his uncle. The only answer was a sound cuffing; and the only result in the boy an intenser hatred of the army. Nevertheless, though his father was obdurate, his uncle, Captain Alexander Cochrane of the navy, had noted the lad's true feelings, and quietly entered his name in his ship's books as a common seaman, in order to give him some standing in the service.

In 1788 Lord Dundonald married a second wife, and having thus increased his income was able to send Cochrane and his brother Basil to school. Thus Cochrane at the age of thirteen was able to combine in his single person the ensign of the Hundred-and-Fourth Foot, the seaman of H.M.S. *Caroline*, and the humble pupil at a Kensington seminary. Unfortunately this did not last long. Lord Dundonald resumed his manufacturing speculations; and after six months the boys were withdrawn from school through want of money to defray their fees. They were then taken up to Scotland, where they spent four years

and a half as best they might, no further effort being made to give them any regular training. Nevertheless, to their immense credit, they had worked hard at school; and Thomas Cochrane in those barren years in Scotland laboured incessantly to attain such meagre knowledge as lay within his reach. For young as he was he had made up his mind to two things: that he must depend upon his own efforts for his success in life; and that whatever his career, it should not be that of an officer in the army. What he learned, in his father's laboratory or elsewhere, we know not, though it is certain that he shared his father's predilection for natural science, and that, whatever his task, he worked hard.

Pleased with his son's industry and overcome by his firmness Lord Dundonald at last consented that Cochrane should join his uncle's ship and go to sea. Then came the difficulty of providing him with an outfit, a difficulty which was only overcome by the kindness of Lord Hopetoun, who advanced £100 for the purpose. Thus hardly did one of Britain's greatest sailors enter into his country's service. Once finally equipped he left Scotland, and refusing all invitations to stay in London, joined H.M.S. *Hind* at Sheerness on June 27th, 1793. Cochrane was in his eighteenth year, and the great war of the Revolution had just begun. One must never forget of this man that he was born four months after Bunker's Hill, and joined the navy during the Reign of Terror.

CHAPTER II

EARLY SERVICES—CRUISE OF THE "SPEEDY"

1793–1801

COCHRANE'S introduction to his first ship was not altogether promising. The first-lieutenant, who received him, was dressed as an ordinary seaman, and with a marling-spike round his neck and a lump of grease in his hand was busily engaged in setting up the rigging. This officer, whom we know by no other name than that of Jack Larmour, was a man who had risen by sheer superiority of seamanship from the forecastle to the quarterdeck, and was not likely to be pleased with the aspect of an oldish midshipman, over six feet high, the nephew of his captain and a lord to boot. After a few words of forced civility he ordered Cochrane down to the midshipman's berth and bade him "get his traps below." Cochrane was hardly gone when the first-lieutenant broke out with: "This Lord Cochrane's chest! Does Lord Cochrane think he is going to bring a cabin aboard? The service is going to the devil." Then there was a sound of sawing, and Cochrane returned to find one end of his chest sawn off just beyond the keyhole, and to hear the first-lieutenant's criticisms on the lubberliness of

shoregoing folks in not placing keyholes where they could most easily be got at. With affected simplicity Cochrane thanked him; but the first-lieutenant fortunately was too dull to observe the sarcasm, or Cochrane's passion for a telling reply might have brought him into trouble even earlier than it did.

Despite this unpromising entry, however, it was great good fortune for Cochrane to begin his service under such an officer as rough old Jack Larmour. For Jack, though his ideas might be bounded strictly by the bow and stern of a ship, was at any rate a past master of his profession, who never gave a man an order which he could not better execute himself. Such an instructor was invaluable to a keen young officer who was anxious to learn his duty. Very soon each discovered the virtues of the other, and the two became fast friends. Another of the lieutenants, Mr. Murray, also gave Cochrane timely help by lending him money wherewith to supply deficiencies in his ill-chosen outfit; a kindness no less difficult than thoughtful to a penniless, proud, and sensitive boy. In fact the *Hind* was a happy ship. The captain, though a strict disciplinarian, liked his young officers to enjoy themselves when they could; and as the destination of the *Hind* was to search the Norway fiords for French privateers, there was plenty of useful duty to be learned on board, and abundance of pleasure, such as delights the midshipman's heart, to be found ashore. The cruise, though as war-service uneventful, for the ship had not the luck to fall in with privateers, was to the younger officers a perpetual holiday. One small incident alone marred Cochrane's enjoyment. He had made up his mind from the first

never to commit any act worthy of punishment; but Jack Larmour had likewise made up his mind that there existed no such thing as a faultless midshipman. Jack proved to be right; and for a slight neglect of duty Cochrane spent his first sojourn at the masthead on a bitter day with the thermometer below zero. He never gave Jack a chance of mastheading him again.

After a few months the *Hind* returned from Norway, and Captain Alexander Cochrane was appointed to command a larger frigate, the *Thetis*, which was ordered to equip at Sheerness. Jack Larmour, whose favourite relaxation was to relinquish his own work and do that of an ordinary seaman, of course stayed on board to fit out his new ship, and Cochrane begged his permission to do likewise. This favour was graciously conceded, on condition that he, like the first-lieutenant, should put off the officer and assume the garb of a seaman. Cochrane asked for nothing better; so with knife in belt and marling-spike in hand he set to work, under the tuition of the captain of the forecastle. These matters are not mentioned without a purpose; we shall find Cochrane's mastery of the details of his profession of priceless value to him in the days of his highest command.

The *Thetis* when ready for sea joined a squadron under Admiral Murray, which was ordered to the coast of North America to intercept American vessels laden with provisions for French ports. This cruise again was for Cochrane wholly uneventful and inglorious, but none the less saw him rise rapidly in rank. On January 14th, 1795, after little more than a year's service, he was appointed acting third-lieutenant of the *Thetis;* three months later he was, on the application of

Captain Rodham Home, promoted to be acting-lieutenant of the *Africa*, with a provisional commission confirming his rank; and finally, on the 5th of January, 1796, on the promotion of the first-lieutenant of the *Thetis*, he was transferred to his uncle's ship once more. While Cochrane was making his passage from the *Africa* to the *Thetis* in H.M.S. *Lynx*, the captain of the last-named ship one day observed a quantity of stable-litter floating on the surface of the sea, and following the track thereof, overtook, as he had expected, and captured a vessel laden with transport animals for one of the French possessions. That Cochrane should have recorded this little incident shows the keenness of his appreciation for what (to borrow a metaphor from the chase) may be termed the woodcraft of war. No man, when his opportunity came, showed a more complete mastery of that most entertaining though difficult of arts.

On rejoining the *Thetis* Cochrane, thanks to the false service gained by his uncle's formal entry of his name on his ship's books, was able to offer himself for examination as lieutenant, and to qualify formally for that grade, after little more than two years' service. Such a transaction can only be described as a job; and it is noteworthy as the only job which Cochrane, in a life's crusade against jobbery, ever saw reason to defend. But we need not now dwell on the irony of the situation, for jobbery is sometimes, as in Cochrane's case, well justified of her children. After the examination Cochrane was appointed by Admiral Vandeput to a lieutenancy on board his flagship, the *Resolution*, and there he spent the rest of his dreary service on the North American station, finally returning to England in the *Thetis*

in 1798. So far all had gone well with him; he had served on happy ships and gained credit with his superiors. We now enter on his first period of really active service, and on the beginning of his troubles.

Towards the close of 1798 Admiral Lord Keith, who had been appointed to relieve Lord St. Vincent in the command of the Mediterranean fleet (though not of the Mediterranean station), offered to take Cochrane with him on board the flagship as a supernumerary. Cochrane gladly accepted, and on his arrival at Gibraltar was presented to Lord St. Vincent, who received him kindly and appointed him to Lord Keith's new flagship the *Barfleur*. The chief business then on hand being the blockade of the Spanish fleet in Cadiz, Lord Keith's squadron anchored within seven miles of that port, waiting for the time when the Spaniards, who had twenty-two ships to the British twelve, should come out and fight. But the Spaniards would not come out; so there the British ships lay for four long months, some of their number being occasionally detached to Tetuan to provide the fleet with water and provisions. Readers of Marryat will remember Mr. Midshipman Easy's visit to Tetuan and his cruise with a cargo of bullocks; it was these same Tetuan bullocks that first brought Cochrane into trouble. The officers of the *Barfleur*, knowing the commercial value of raw hides, made a practice of slaughtering bullocks for the whole squadron on board the flagship, and stowing away the hides in empty casks with a view to future sale. The not unnatural result was that the *Barfleur* grew to be known as the "Stinking Scotch Ship." Cochrane, as junior lieutenant and therefore saddled with the

main burden of the dirty work, as a smart officer, and finally as a Scotchman, strongly objected to the practice (wherein he was undoubtedly right), and as was his nature took good care that his sentiments should be known. Either from this or from some other irritating cause he became embroiled in an angry dispute over a trifling matter with the first-lieutenant, a dispute which went so far that Cochrane finally closed it with a challenge. The first-lieutenant naturally appealed to the captain, who very sensibly tried to smooth matters over by suggesting that Cochrane should apologise to his superior officer, and that therewith the affair should end. Cochrane declined to apologise; he was, he said, in the right, and therefore there was no occasion for apology. Such is not the logic of the British Navy. The first-lieutenant demanded a court-martial, which was perforce granted by Lord Keith; and Cochrane, though acquitted, was admonished to be more careful in future. "Now pray, Lord Cochrane," afterwards said Lord Keith to him privately, "pray avoid for the future all flippancy towards superior officers." Surely kindlier warning was never uttered to a man who had shown, under some provocation it is true, not flippancy but temper. A junior lieutenant, however much in the right, who rejects his captain's good offices towards healing a breach with a superior is fortunate to find a second friend in the Admiral. The service was not unkind to Cochrane in this the first of his quarrels.

Weary of waiting for the Spaniards to meet him, Lord Keith, in the spring of 1799, drew off the whole of his ships to Tetuan. Immediately on his return intelligence came that five Spanish ships had slipped out

of Ferrol, and that the French fleet under Admiral Bruix, having eluded Lord Bridport's blockade of Brest, was on its way down to join the Spanish fleet in Cadiz. On the morning of May 6th the French fleet appeared, thirty-three sail in all, making, with the twenty-two Spanish ships in Cadiz, fifty-five ships against the British sixteen. With superb audacity Keith stepped in between the two fleets and offered battle, with twice his numbers in his front and a superior force in his rear; surely the grandest position, for this was daring without foolhardiness, ever taken by British admiral. The French, however, declined the combat, and made away to the southward, whither Keith, hoping to catch them before they reached Toulon, followed them with all possible haste. For this raid of Admiral Bruix, absolutely fruitless though it proved to be, was the most critical event of the whole war at sea. The British ships, expecting no such movement, were dispersed before Cadiz, Minorca, Palermo, Naples, and Acre, in small detachments, each one of which might, if Bruix had been a Nelson or a Cochrane, have been annihilated in detail. Fully alive to the danger Lord St. Vincent took measures to concentrate his scattered forces, and Keith's squadron, as we have seen, made its way, by his orders, to Gibraltar, arriving there on May 10th.

On the 12th, after hurried preparations, this same squadron once more took up the pursuit of the French fleet; of which pursuit Cochrane, in the interest of Lord Keith, or rather in prejudice of Lord St. Vincent, gives a long and minute account. As every reader of naval history knows, Lord Keith was censured at the time for his failure to catch Bruix, and this censure has

been endorsed by so eminent an authority as Captain Mahan. Cochrane's account, on the other hand, lays the whole blame of the failure not on Keith, but on St. Vincent. There is no profit in enlarging upon the controversy in this place; it must suffice that Keith, no matter through whose fault, failed to catch the Toulon fleet, and that Cochrane,[1] no incompetent critic where his judgment was unclouded by political prejudice, held St. Vincent to be primarily responsible.

After throwing supplies into Genoa Bruix doubled back on his course, passed through the Straits of Gibraltar, and triumphantly effected his junction with the Spaniards, previously so nobly foiled by Keith at Carthagena. Without a moment's hesitation Keith steered to cut them off at Brest; but he arrived, just twenty-four hours too late, to find them safely at anchor in Brest harbour. Thus baffled at all points, Keith sailed for Torbay, and joined the Channel fleet under Sir Alan Gardner.

To those who have read Cochrane's autobiography his impatience at the failure of Lord Keith's cruise can be no surprise. Nor, so far as we can judge, was such irritation confined to him; for there is no campaign, however successful, in which mistakes are not made, and in which there are not moments when every one is dissatisfied. On reaching Torbay Cochrane was sent on board the Commander-in-Chief's ship with despatches. He was received by the flag-captain, as he tells us credibly enough, with an overbearing manner and an

[1] It should be added that if Cochrane's dates be correct, his story is utterly irreconcilable with Captain Mahan's, and that Collingwood held St. Vincent and Keith to be alike blamable.

uncalled-for reprimand, to which, as was his unfortunate way, he returned a "plain-spoken" answer. So trivial a matter would not be worth chronicling but that Cochrane himself, after an interval of fifty years, records it with a perennial freshness of bitter feeling that gives a clue to his character.

Luckily the matter went no further; and in December Cochrane returned with Lord Keith to Gibraltar, proceeding thence to Palermo. There he met Nelson, at that time the darling of the Neapolitan Court, with whom, though debarred by fate from the honour of service, he had many a conversation. From him Cochrane received and treasured one thoroughly Nelsonic maxim for combat with the French. "Never mind manœuvres; always go at them." Let no one mistake the meaning of this counsel, for it is the voice of genius addressed to genius. To dispense with manœuvring is the highest of all manœuvres, only less difficult to learn, perhaps, than the power to command a "band of brothers."

Shortly after Cochrane was entrusted with his first independent command, being sent as prize-master on board the *Généreux*, a French seventy-four lately captured by Nelson's squadron, with orders to take her into Port Mahon. This short voyage proved to be a critical one. The vessel's rigging was in a most defective state, and her crew was made up of the sick and invalided men of the fleet, so that she was in no condition to face heavy weather. As luck would have it, however, she immediately encountered a severe gale. The masts swayed so violently with every roll of the ship that it was dangerous to go aloft; indeed, the men refused to do so

until Cochrane himself, with his brother Archibald, showed them the way. Fortunately the weather moderated, or the *Généreux* could hardly have arrived, as she did, in safety at Mahon. By this most perilous passage, however, Cochrane was delivered from the miserable fate which presently overtook his shipmates of the flagship; for very soon after he had left her the *Queen Charlotte* perished by an accidental fire, and with her three-fourths of her officers and crew. Nor was this passive advantage the only one gained by him, for, on the arrival of the *Généreux*, Lord Keith was so well pleased with his conduct in command that he appointed him to the command of a prize-brig, the *Speedy*, then lying in Port Mahon. A far finer ship had been originally destined for him, but was made over, perhaps not quite fairly, to another officer. But the *Speedy* was at any rate a ship, and that, though insufficient for lesser men, was enough for Cochrane.

This famous brig was, to use Cochrane's own words, little more than a burlesque on a man-of-war even in the year 1800, being of about the size of an average coasting brig, with a burden of no more than one hundred and fifty-eight tons. She was "crowded rather than manned" with a crew of eighty-four men and six officers, Cochrane himself included, and was armed with fourteen four-pounders, "a species of gun little larger than a blunderbuss." Indeed, on one occasion Cochrane derisively walked the quarter-deck with a whole broadside of the *Speedy's* shot in his pockets. The commanding officer's cabin was but five feet high, somewhat strait accommodation for a man of six feet two; and Cochrane found that the only practic-

able method of shaving was to remove the skylight and make a toilet-table of the quarterdeck. But for such trifles he cared, in the pride of his first command, but little. He did, indeed, try to improve the *Speedy's* armament, but found that there was neither space in her to work larger guns, nor sufficient strength in her timbers to stand the concussion of their discharge. With her rig he was more fortunate. Having made a requisition for a new mainyard, he was supplied with the fore-topgallant yard of the *Généreux;* but even this spar was held by the dockyard authorities to be too large, and to require cutting down. Cochrane, anxious at all events to preserve a large spread of canvas, eluded the order by causing the yardarms to be planed, so as to give them the appearance of having been cut; and with this imaginary truncation the authorities were unwittingly content. Thus equipped the *Speedy* sailed from Mahon to Cagliari, and captured her first prize on the 10th of May. She was then kept with Lord Keith's squadron before Genoa for a week or two until the close of Massena's heroic defence (June 4th), and finally detached ten days later with orders to cruise down the coast.

The cruise opened prosperously enough. Within ten days Cochrane was at Leghorn with two prizes: a week later found him at Mahon with a third; and by the 3rd of August he was again at Leghorn with three more. Lord Keith, whose flagship was lying in Leghorn roads, received him with much encouragement, and on the 16th of August despatched him once more, this time to the Spanish coast, with orders to harass the enemy's shipping to the utmost of his power. To give even

a summary of the innumerable captures and minor exploits of the *Speedy* would be tedious. The following may serve for a single specimen: "*25th June*—Quitted Leghorn, and on the 26th were off Bastia, in chase of a ship which ran for that place and anchored under a fort. Made at her and brought her away. Proved to be the Spanish letter of marque *Assuncion* of ten guns, and thirty-three men. On taking possession five gunboats left Bastia in chase of us; took the prize in tow, and kept up a running fight with the gunboats till after midnight, when they left us." But it must be noted that Cochrane's method of fulfilling his instructions was both original and daring. The ordinary movements of cruisers consisted in coming inshore by day and standing off at night. Cochrane, contrary to all precedent, made a practice of keeping out of sight in the offing all day, and running in shore just before dawn. The process sounds simple and, indeed, obvious, inasmuch as the enemy's coasters generally crept out at night in order to avoid capture; but Cochrane was the first to hit upon it, or, it may be, the first who had the nerve always to keep close in shore at night. He had, indeed, a positive passion for night-attacks; and we shall see later that his genius for planning and executing them, thus early ripened, bore in later days astonishing fruit. On the Spanish coast he wrought from the first such havoc among the enemy's coasting craft that when, after barely two months' cruising, he returned to Mahon he learned that the *Speedy* was a marked ship, and that several armed vessels were on the look-out to capture her on her reappearance.

Unable to strengthen the armament of the miserable

little vessel, Cochrane fell back on stratagem. He painted the *Speedy* in imitation of a Danish brig which was well known on the coast, and shipped a Danish quartermaster with, more important still, the uniform of a Danish officer. This done he sailed once more for his old station, and captured prizes, armed and unarmed, with a rapidity that made him the terror of the coast; and, as every prize meant money, he reaped a golden harvest for his officers and ship's company. Once his eagerness went near to compass his destruction. Seeing a large ship inshore which had the appearance of a heavily-laden merchantman, he at once gave chase, only to find on coming up with her that she was a powerful Spanish frigate heavily armed and crowded with men. To attack her was hopeless, to escape impossible. With imperturbable coolness Cochrane hoisted Danish colours, and spoke the frigate; but the Spaniards were not satisfied, and sent off a boat to board the *Speedy*. Then the Danish quartermaster was brought forward in his Danish uniform, and at the same time the *Speedy* hoisted the quarantine flag. The horror of the plague, always strong in the Spanish mind, was at once effectually roused by the sight of the yellow bunting; and the boat, instead of boarding the *Speedy*, was glad to hail her from a distance. Whereupon the pseudo-Danish officer explained that his ship was but two days out from Algiers, where the plague was raging furiously. This was enough: the Spaniards hastily wished him a pleasant voyage, and pulled back to the frigate; and the *Speedy* made off to resume her usual avocations.

In January, 1801, while making a short stay at Malta, Cochrane narrowly escaped a premature ending to his

career. The occasion was ridiculous enough. It happened that the officers of a French Royalist regiment were patronising a fancy-ball at Valetta. Cochrane likewise presented himself, in the costume of a British ordinary seaman complete, as he assures us, to the minutest detail. The French officers objected to his appearance in that dress; Cochrane, always ready with an answer, argued that it was as legitimate as that of an Arcadian shepherd. Finally one of the officers tried to expel him by force: Cochrane answered with a blow; and in a moment all was uproar. Next morning the two combatants met behind the ramparts and exchanged pistol-shots. Cochrane shot the Frenchman through the thigh; the Frenchman's bullet, passing through Cochrane's coat, waistcoat, and shirt, bruised his side. Fighting man though he was, such a tragical close to a harmless frolic was little to Cochrane's taste; and he took the affair not a little to heart,—as well he might, for more serious work lay before him.

Returning once more to the Spanish coast, Cochrane resumed his depredations with great effect. In March the *Speedy* narrowly escaped capture by a Spanish frigate, and was only saved by her captain's resource. Having made shift to keep ahead of his pursuer during a twenty-four hours' chase, he eluded her, when darkness came on, by dropping overboard a tub with a light in it to occupy the Spaniard's attention, and then sailing away on a different course. Unable to catch the hated *Speedy* by other means, the Spaniards now endeavoured to entrap her by stratagem. On the 5th of May, on arriving at Barcelona, Cochrane was surprised to see a swarm of Spanish gunboats, craft that generally took care to keep

out of his way, come boldly out against him. He at once pursued, and the gunboats turning fled into the harbour. But Cochrane, suspecting some trick, would not follow them inside, and on standing in to the harbour next morning he discovered, as he had expected, that a large Spanish frigate was waiting for him within. Most men would have blessed their good genius and made the best of their retreat. Cochrane, on the contrary, resolved to attack. His officers (a remarkable proof of their faith in him) had been ill content that he had frightened away a former frigate with the quarantine flag instead of attacking her; and he now told them that they should have the fight that they desired. The decision was the bolder in that the crew of the *Speedy*, through the absence of many men in prizes, was reduced to fifty-four souls, including all officers.

Hoisting American colours in order to puzzle the frigate until the brig had reached a favourable position, Cochrane suddenly ran up the British ensign and made straight for her. The Spaniards fired two broadsides without result, and then the *Speedy*, running in under her lee, locked her yards in the Spanish rigging. Cochrane, who had reserved his fire till this moment, now poured in his broadside with great effect. The Spanish guns, as he had foreseen, owing to the greater height of the frigate out of the water, could not be depressed so as to play effectively on the *Speedy*; and while their shot flew harmlessly over the heads of the British, the *Speedy's* guns, elevated and trebly shotted, told with formidable execution on the Spaniard's main deck. Twice the Spanish officers gave the order to board, and twice the British, hearing the order, sheered off just at the moment

of its execution, at the same time giving the Spaniards a broadside and a volley before they could recover themselves. The enemy, seeing the futility of attempting to board, now returned to their guns, cutting up the *Speedy's* sails and rigging, but doing little further damage. But after an hour of this work Cochrane saw that, if he meant to succeed, he must end the action forthwith. Telling the men that they must take the frigate at once or be taken themselves, he ordered some of them to blacken their faces and then called all hands to board. The doctor, Mr. Guthrie, gallantly volunteered to take the helm, and to remain for the time the only soul on board the *Speedy*. All was soon ready. The doctor laid the *Speedy* alongside with admirable skill, and in a few seconds the whole of the little British crew was on the enemy's deck. The bulk of the Spaniards were stationed to repel men who might board by the head; but when they saw the blackened faces break through the white smoke of the bow guns they were for the moment transfixed to the deck with horror at so diabolical an apparition. Cochrane had counted on Spanish superstition for the gain of a momentary advantage, and he was not deceived. Before the Spaniards could recover themselves the rest of the *Speedy's* men had fallen upon their rear, and the whole mass was engaged in a gallant but confused struggle in the frigate's waist. Seeing the Spanish colours still flying, Cochrane ordered them to be hauled down. The Spaniards, supposing the act to be that of their own officers, without further ado surrendered; and the *Gamo*, of thirty-two heavy guns and three hundred and nineteen men, was the prize of the *Speedy*, of fourteen four-pounders and

fifty-four men. Even so the victory was hardly complete, for there were two hundred and sixty-three unharmed Spanish prisoners on board and but forty-five British sailors to guard them. Cochrane drove the Spaniards forthwith into the hold, and there kept them at bay by means of one of their own guns pointed down the hatchway, with men standing over them with lighted matches. The Barcelona gunboats which had witnessed the action made no attempt to rescue the frigate, or the British might have fared badly enough. Then Archibald Cochrane, who had boarded by his brother's side, was placed in charge of the *Gamo* with a crew of thirty men, and the *Speedy* sailed triumphant with her prize to Port Mahon. The British loss in the action was one man killed, Lieutenant Parker and seven men wounded; that of the Spaniards included the captain and thirteen men killed, and forty-one men wounded. To this day the capture of the *Gamo* remains unmatched in the annals of naval warfare for skill, calculation, and daring.

After some days spent in refitting the *Speedy*, Cochrane was preparing to return to his old cruising-ground, when he received orders to sail to Algiers, and there remonstrate with the Dey against the high-handed behaviour of his cruisers. What possible weight such remonstrance could carry when backed by no more imposing force than one of the smallest and worst ships in the service, it was and still is difficult to see. Still there was nothing for it but to obey; so to Algiers Cochrane went, and remonstrated as best he could. The Dey's answer was that he might go away again, and think himself fortunate to have escaped an Algerian dungeon

for his impertinence. Very thankfully Cochrane went, and resumed his depredations on the Spanish coast.

His next prize was a Spanish privateer of six guns, which he fitted out at his own expense as a tender to the *Speedy*, and placed under the command of his brother Archibald. Shortly after, the two ships fell in with H.M.S. *Kangaroo*, Captain Pulling, who, being Cochrane's senior, was of course his commanding officer. With him Cochrane planned an attack on a Spanish xebec of twenty guns, three Spanish gunboats, and a convoy of ten merchantmen, which were lying at Oropesa under the guns of a fort. Cochrane as usual was for doing the business by night, but was overruled by Pulling. Accordingly at noon on June 9th the three ships ran boldly into Oropesa, the *Kangaroo* engaging the fort, and the *Speedy* and her tender the four war-vessels. The Spanish fire was just beginning to fail under the superior fire of the British, when suddenly a Spanish felucca of twelve guns and two more gunboats arrived to the rescue. Nothing daunted, the British began the action afresh, and handled the new arrivals so roughly that for a time they were beaten off. Cochrane then returned to his original adversaries, and after an hour's more firing succeeded in sinking all four of them, as well as three of the convoy. This was no sooner done than the three rescuing ships came up to the fray once more. By this time the action had lasted nine hours; and both *Kangaroo* and *Speedy*, having expended almost the whole of their ammunition, were in a very critical position. Both commanders, however, were equal to the occasion. The *Kangaroo*

shifted in closer to the fort than before; while the *Speedy*, with not half a dozen rounds left wherewith to continue the action, rushed open-mouthed at the felucca and gunboats. This was enough; the Spanish fort was abandoned, and the Spanish ships turned and fled. Of the convoy three were sunk, four were stranded, and the remainder were carried off by the little British squadron to Port Mahon.

Greatly to his disappointment Cochrane found, on his arrival there, that the *Gamo* had not been purchased into the service, as he had hoped, but sold to the Algerines. "To have obtained command of the *Gamo*, even as a means of deception on the Spanish coast," he writes, "I would scarcely have changed places with an admiral." We can hardly suppress a feeling of regret that such an opportunity of exercising his peculiar form of genius was denied him, for with an effective ship under his command it is difficult to think what he could not have done. As it was, however, he was left in the *Speedy*, and ordered, much to his disgust, to convoy a packet-ship, which was a notoriously bad sailer, with her mails to Gibraltar. Seeing no reason why he should not combine a little legitimate business with his unwelcome duty, Cochrane, in cruel disregard of the packet-master's feelings, ran along the Spanish coast right in the track of hostile privateers, examining every bay for Spanish ships as he went. Near Alicant he found some vessels at anchor, and made towards them; whereupon, evidently knowing their enemy, they deliberately ran ashore. Unable, under his instructions, to delay in order to get them off, Cochrane set them on fire. One of the vessels

being laden with oil, the result was a blaze which illumined the sky for miles round.

Most unfortunately there were three French line-of-battle ships, the *Indomptable*, *Formidable*, and *Dessaix*, in the vicinity, which, attracted by the flare of the burning vessels, ran in shore to see what was the matter. At daybreak on the morning of July 3rd these ships were observed at a distance from the *Speedy*, and were judged by the heated imaginations on board to be Spanish galleons from South America. Thereupon the paltry little brig at once prepared to chase. With the coming of the day, however, the galleons assumed their true character, and then it became clear that the *Speedy's* fate was sealed. It was not the first time that the hope of prize-money had lured Cochrane into dangerous situations; and on this occasion fortune sided against him. The *Speedy* fled away to windward, but the French ships at once gave chase, and separated on different tacks so as to give her the least possible chance of escape. In vain Cochrane tried all the shifts that seamanship could suggest to him, sacrificing first guns and then stores in order to lighten his ship; the enemy gained on her continually, firing from time to time ineffectual broadsides and cutting up her rigging with their bow-chasers. After upwards of three hours thus spent within gunshot of the *Dessaix*, Cochrane suddenly bore up and made a last effort to slip past his pursuers before the wind, but without success. The *Dessaix* tacked likewise in pursuit, and approaching within musket-shot, discharged a complete broadside, which, had it taken full effect, would inevitably have sunk the *Speedy*. Seeing the uselessness of further

efforts to escape, Cochrane hauled down his colours, and became prisoner to the French. The captain of the *Dessaix*, however, refused to accept the sword of "an officer who had for so many hours struggled against impossibility."

So ended the cruise of the *Speedy* after thirteen months of active mischief, during which time she had taken or retaken more than fifty vessels, one hundred and twenty-two guns, and more than five hundred prisoners. There is no need to dilate on the skill and daring of her young commander; we need only to be on our guard lest the apparent ease and simplicity wherewith his exploits were achieved should blind us to the enormous difficulties whereby they were beset. Little less remarkable than the even course of his success is the promptitude with which he forthwith developed an original plan of action. Precedent and experience could be of little value for guiding the movements of such a wretched craft as the *Speedy;* yet Cochrane was hardly in command of her before she became the terror of the coast. His whole scheme of operations was found, thought out, and matured at a stroke; in fact it may be said that his genius no sooner felt the warm ray of independent command than it blossomed out full blown almost in an hour.

CHAPTER III

QUARREL WITH THE ADMIRALTY—CRUISE OF THE "PALLAS"—CORVETTES IN THE GARONNE

1801–1806

By good fortune Cochrane did not long remain a prisoner. After the capture of the *Speedy* the *Dessaix* and her consorts proceeded to Algesiras, with the intention of passing the Straits of Gibraltar. There on July 6th they were caught by a British squadron of nine ships under Sir James Saumarez; and Cochrane enjoyed the unusual opportunity of witnessing an action between French and English from the quarterdeck of a French ship; an action, moreover, wherein the British, owing to an astonishing chapter of accidents, suffered heavy loss. One British ship, the *Hannibal*, ran aground, and was compelled to strike to three French ships, all of which were aground. The French, on boarding their prize, for some reason hoisted not French colours, but the Union Jack upside down; whereupon the dockyard authorities, knowing nothing of what had passed and seeing only a signal of distress, sent off almost the whole of the reserve seamen and dockyard artificers to her assistance. Captain Pallière of the *Dessaix* was at first in doubt

whether this flotilla of boats was not designed to recapture the *Hannibal*, and sought the advice of Cochrane, who, seeing the mistake, advised him by all means to warn them off by a gun. But the Frenchman was too astute to be easily taken in. The boats were permitted to come alongside the *Hannibal*, and then quietly and unostentatiously captured, one after another, until almost the entire naval establishment of Gibraltar had surrendered without a blow. This extraordinary occurrence led to negotiations for an exchange of prisoners, whereby Cochrane was enabled to proceed to Gibraltar on parole. A few days later (July 12th) the French fleet, which had meanwhile been reinforced by the Spanish Admiral from Cadiz, set sail from Algesiras and was again engaged by Saumarez. On this occasion the chapter of accidents told tragically against the Spaniards. Captain Keats of the *Superb*, who led the British van, disdaining to fire more than a couple of broadsides, right and left, at the two sternmost Spanish ships, dashed on past them against the main body. Thereupon these two ships, the *Real Carlos* and the *Hermengildo*, each mistaking the other for the aggressor, began a fierce engagement. Before the mistake could be rectified the *Real Carlos* caught fire: the *Hermengildo*, in the confusion, fell on board her and caught fire likewise; and both ships blew up with almost every soul on board them. Keats meanwhile went on and captured a third ship, the *San Antonio*, a feat which, among other results, restored to Cochrane his liberty; his release being obtained in exchange for that of the second captain of the prize.

On his return home Cochrane and his relations began

to press the Admiralty for promotion. In the ordinary course advancement to post-rank might have been expected to follow directly on such an action as the capture of the *Gamo;* but in Cochrane's case it was withheld until three months after the engagement, while other officers, his juniors, were promoted over his head. Lord Dundonald repeatedly urged his son's claims, and Sir Alexander Cochrane backed them; but the First Lord put them off with excuses and evasions until his own good time. According to his biographer's statement: "Lord St. Vincent was so much pressed on the subject of Lord Cochrane's promotion for taking the *Gamo*, that it became almost a point of honour with the earl not to make him a captain." There may be some truth here, but other motives must have been also at work. Cochrane had made no secret of his contempt for St. Vincent's failure to catch the French fleet under Bruix, and of his opinion that it was he, and not Keith, who was to blame for the fiasco. It is hardly possible that his criticisms should not have reached St. Vincent's ears; an examination of Cochrane's record would naturally follow, and would show that he had been tried by court-martial for disrespect to a superior officer; whence the not wholly unjust conclusion would be drawn that Cochrane was over-prone to insubordination. St. Vincent was not the man at any time, and least of all when irritated by personal pique, to pass lightly over such a failing. Let us not misjudge St. Vincent. The unbending old warrior who watched the mutineer swing at the yard-arm, and raised his hat with the grim comment, "Discipline is preserved, sir," could cordially uphold a complaint against the Admiralty from such a man as

Collingwood. But Cochrane was no Collingwood; and St. Vincent knew it.

The quarrel between Cochrane and the First Lord was soon still further embittered. Before leaving the Mediterranean Cochrane had applied for the promotion of his first-lieutenant, Parker, who had been severely wounded in the affair of the *Gamo*. Receiving no reply, he wrote again on his return home with the same result; and finally, in answer to a third letter, received an intimation, "That it was unusual to promote two officers for such a service; besides which, the small number of men killed on board the *Speedy* did not warrant the application." A more monstrous sentence than this last was never penned. The vulgar world has ever judged, and will ever judge, of military operations by the "butcher's bill." It is unfortunate, but it is inevitable, for the world knows of no better standard; but that a master of the art of war like St. Vincent should have endorsed such a doctrine was unpardonable. It was as though Michael Angelo should rebuke Raphael for producing a finer drawing with five strokes of the pencil than a commonplace artist with fifty. Even if the blame be shifted from St. Vincent to some obscure clerk, the letter remains inexcusable for its violation of the sound official rule which refuses all reasons for an unreasonable decision.

Cochrane, not unnaturally, was intensely irritated by this reply; and, as fate would have it, the material for a crushing retort lay ready to his hand. He wrote again to St. Vincent to say that by his lordship's own showing Lieutenant Parker had earned promotion, inasmuch as the casualties on board the *Speedy* were greater than

those of the flagship in the great action which had given his lordship his title. The shaft no doubt flew home, for the *Victory* had lost but one man killed in the action off St. Vincent; and there were not wanting critics in the navy to exalt Nelson's share in the victory at the expense of the Commander-in-Chief. Cochrane admitted later that this letter was imprudent; it was more, it was insulting. Whatever the provocation, and it was undoubtedly great, whatever the temptation to so obvious and telling a repartee, and this we must admit to have been great likewise, such a letter from a young post-captain, even of the most brilliant promise, to a man like St. Vincent was insufferable. But Cochrane did not stop there. Not content with making an enemy of the First Lord, he pursued his application to the Board of Admiralty collectively, with renewed criticisms of St. Vincent's original reply. No notice being taken of this, he wrote again with more moderation, and was informed that it was not for officers so to correspond with the Board. Persisting further with a third letter, he was snubbed with the peculiar official thoroughness that closes a correspondence as effectually as an editor's note. The person who suffered most from the quarrel was, as might have been expected, the unfortunate Parker, upon whom the Admiralty visited the sins of his patron with a meanness and jealousy that finally broke his heart.

Thus deprived, and mainly it must be confessed through his own fault, of all chance of present employment, Cochrane turned his attention to the abuses of the navy. We have no intention here of giving details of the appalling corruption that pervaded the naval departments in general, and the dockyards in particular,—of ships hired

and never used, ships built and never bolted, stores paid for and never supplied. Whole crews went to the bottom, because men drove the heads and ends of bolts only, and made profit out of the rest of the metal; sick and wounded men were robbed of the few comforts allowed them out of the national purse; prisoners of war were starved that greedy favourites or hungry voters might grow fat. One of the greatest curses of war is that it is the non-combatant rogue's opportunity. War means extraordinary expenditure, and extraordinary expenditure, particularly if defrayed by loan, breeds rapacity and dishonesty as surely as drought produces dust. In the England of that day, through the long training of Parliament in the school of corruption, there was but one way in which the Government could be carried on, namely, by the purchase of votes; and, though the old-fashioned cash-system was not yet fallen obsolete, political support was purchased largely by licenses to plunder the army and navy. No officer on active service could fail to see these abuses, nor could hope that he would not suffer from them. St. Vincent himself in those very days was striving, with better will than intelligence, to grapple with them at the Admiralty. Cochrane, too, had felt them; and he now set himself to ferret them out, and note them down for display at some fitting opportunity. He was already bitten with the ambition of making a figure in Parliament, and possessed with the old Radical faith that salvation lies in extension of the franchise.

These researches ended, he betook himself to the University of Edinburgh. Fully alive to the incompleteness of his early education, he determined to make good deficiencies while he might; and, accordingly, took his

place among the students (Palmerston being one of them) who sat at the feet of Dugald Stewart. Like all earnest men who begin their education late, his only thought was how to turn his time to best account; and he records with pride that he never but once was absent from lectures, and then (the excuse will, we fear, bring a smile to the face of an English undergraduate) in order to attend the funeral of a near relative. Naturally he saw little of his fellow-students; a man who has studied human nature in the school of war does not seek a university to make friendships with boys. Moreover, he was saving up money for the purchase of a seat in Parliament; so that economy, as well as study, dictated seclusion and a quiet life. There is something rather pathetic in the submission of this proud spirit to every man from whom he could hope to learn anything. He had found a Jack Larmour to teach him his work in the navy; and he now sought instructors in a far more difficult art. It was not enough for him to command disciplined men in war: he must needs sway the undisciplined in peace; and to that end he was persuaded that knowledge was power. Unfortunately the knowledge that he needed was not taught at Edinburgh; it comes only, as Juvenal says, from heaven.

The course of these studies was broken by the renewal of the war in 1803. Cochrane applied for a ship, suggesting the names of several that would suit him, but was given to understand that the navy contained no ship for him, until at last, by the threat of returning to Edinburgh, he succeeded in extorting an appointment. The vessel assigned to him proved to be the *Arab*, a collier purchased into the service for political ends,

which sailed so badly as to be useless for a cruiser. Cochrane's ardent desire was to harass Napoleon's flotilla of invasion, which at that time was in process of concentration at Boulogne; but to cruise inshore with a vessel that "sailed like a haystack," was out of the question. He reported accordingly that the *Arab* was worthless for such service, and thereupon received orders to convoy the Greenland whaling-fleet from Shetland, and then cruise in the North Sea to protect the fisheries. The commission was a bitter jest, inasmuch as in the quarter assigned to him there were no fisheries to protect. Cochrane's fate, to use his own words, was "exile in a tub at the expense of the nation." In such wise did the Admiralty take, meanly enough, its revenge, and bring home to him the fact (which he ought to have known already) that a subordinate who attacks the department that controls him simply runs his head against a stone wall. We must needs bear a grudge against the Admiralty for robbing us of the spectacle of a duel between Cochrane and Napoleon, though we cannot hold Cochrane altogether guiltless of the catastrophe. As to the comparative patriotism of the department and the officer we shall be in a better position to form a judgment at a later stage.

The penal servitude in the *Arab* lasted from October, 1803, to December, 1804, by which time Lord St. Vincent had resigned the post of First Lord to Lord Melville. Through the good offices of his kinsman the Duke of Hamilton Cochrane was now appointed to the command of the *Pallas*, a new fir-built frigate of thirty-four guns; and, as compensation for previous ill-treatment, he was ordered to cruise for a month off the Azores. Determined

to make the most of his month, Cochrane ran across the Bay of Biscay, and thence worked up towards the Azores in the track of ships bound from the West Indies to Cadiz. The *Pallas* had hardly altered her course, when she picked up a rich prize (February 6th); and before a fortnight had elapsed she had captured three more, and narrowly missed a fourth which carried a million of dollars on board. Cochrane had promised plenty of "pewter and cobs" (ingots and dollars) to seamen who would sail with him, and as usual fulfilled his engagement. Let us, however, not omit to add that, finding that the captain and supercargo of one prize had embarked their all in the venture, he appealed to his officers and men to join him in restoring to them five thousand dollars apiece. "Aye, aye, my lord, with all our hearts," answered the ship's company, and gave the unlucky foreigners three cheers.

On her way home the *Pallas*, like the *Speedy* of former days, narrowly escaped capture at the hands of three French line-of-battle ships, against which she stumbled in the course of a spell of hazy weather. The chase had hardly begun, when the wind rose with a heavy sea. The *Pallas* was so crank, and leaned over so far to leeward under the force of the gale, that her maindeck guns, and even her quarterdeck carronades, were under water. Yet the hostile ships came up with her so fast that it was imperative for her, by some means or other, to carry more sail. Cochrane ordered every spare rope in the frigate to be got up to the mastheads and hove taut, in order to secure the masts, and then set every possible stitch of canvas. The *Pallas* buried herself forecastle under in the sea, but

still the line-of-battle ships gained on her, though they too were pitching so heavily that they could not fire a gun. There was now nothing for it but a manœuvre which would try the security of the masts to the utmost. Cochrane, having ordered his crew to stand by, suddenly gave the word to clew up and haul down every sail at the same instant, and at the same time put the helm hard a-weather, so as to wear the *Pallas* round as quickly as possible. With his perfectly trained men the order was executed with beautiful precision, and though the frigate, thus suddenly brought up, shook from stem to stern in crossing the trough of the sea, yet the masts stood the strain. The Frenchmen, unprepared for such a manœuvre, of course shot past the *Pallas* at full speed, and were several miles beyond her before they could shorten sail or tack in pursuit. Meanwhile Cochrane made sail with all speed in the opposite direction; and, to make assurance doubly sure, at nightfall he had recourse to his old trick of turning adrift a cask with a lantern in it to divert the attention of his pursuers. Thus, by sheer nerve and resource, he made his escape; and a few days later the *Pallas* sailed into Plymouth, with a golden candlestick five feet high (Spanish church-plate captured in one of his prizes) at each masthead. If there were any vacancies on board the frigate we may guess that there was no difficulty in finding men to fill them.

On landing Cochrane employed himself for a few weeks with the search for a suitable borough wherein to launch his candidature at the approaching General Election. Honiton was the nearest in point of distance, and to Honiton accordingly he wended his way. The

port-admiral, who by rather sharp practice had managed to entitle himself to half of Cochrane's prize-money, made no difficulty about granting him leave; and the borough, filled with glowing reports of the said prize-money, received him with uncommon rapture. Greatly to the disappointment of the free and independent electors, Cochrane refused to offer a penny for a vote; and as those were the honest days when candidates bribed with ready money from their own pockets, instead of with promises of plunder from the pockets of others, he was of course defeated. The contest over, he sent the bellman round the town to proclaim that all electors who had voted for Lord Cochrane might repair to his agent and receive ten guineas, being twice the amount of the fee paid by the successful candidate. To the credit of Honiton, his supporters had been more numerous than he had expected; and his agent, evidently wounded in his professional feelings, assured him that the expenditure of a smaller sum before the election would have ensured his return. "Nay," answered Cochrane, "that would have been bribery, with which I, who stand as a reformer of abuses, can have nothing to do; my ten guineas are a reward for resisting the temptation of a bribe." And having thus cast his bread on the waters he returned to his ship.

The *Pallas* put to sea again on May 28th, 1805, bound for Quebec in charge of a convoy. The outward voyage was not without a dangerous interest, inasmuch as dockyard economy had surrounded the ship's compass with iron instead of copper bolts, thereby, of course, rendering it utterly untrustworthy; but in

other respects the duty was thankless and unproductive, except as a stimulus to the inventive faculty which Cochrane had inherited from his father. Knowing from painful experience the ease with which convoys lost sight of their protecting frigate at night through want of a guiding-light of sufficient power, he set himself to construct a lamp which should supply this want, and after some experiments succeeded. He then submitted the lamp to the Admiralty. For a time no notice was taken of it; but on a prize of fifty pounds being offered for the best lamp for this same purpose, Cochrane submitted his invention once more, but this time not in his own name. The lamp was tested exhaustively against many lamps of rival inventors, declared to be the best, and selected as the winner of the prize. But Cochrane's triumph was short-lived; for, when it became known that he was the inventor, not a lamp was ordered. One must needs record such matters, not because they are unique or indeed rare in the history of public offices all the world over, but because it is necessary to keep account of the score in the eternal match between Cochrane and the Admiralty.

In January, 1806, the *Pallas* was employed for a month in the Channel, and after a further month's duty with Admiral Thornborough's squadron parted company for an independent cruise on the 24th of March. Then began a repetition on the French coast of the raids formerly practised by the *Speedy*, made doubly effective by the use of a galley specially designed by Cochrane for work of this kind. The boat required eighteen hands at the oars, and being beautifully modelled and built, was so swift that no coasting-craft

could hope to escape from her. Very soon she became so notorious, that at the mere sight of her the French skippers ran their ships ashore, and took to the boats to save themselves from capture. Thus the prizes were taken without risk or trouble, and the French coasting-traffic paralysed without firing a shot. There is no point more remarkable in Cochrane's genius for war than his power not only of taking what he wanted from the enemy, but of forcing the enemy in sheer despair to make him a present of it.

More serious work came in April. Acting on information as to the movements of a number of French corvettes, Cochrane sailed for the Garonne. Having ascertained on his arrival that one of these corvettes was lying some way up the river, he sent away the whole of his crew, with the exception of about forty men, in the boats to cut her out. The expedition, as was the rule with Cochrane, was despatched at night; and before daybreak of April 6th the *Tapageuse* of fourteen guns was, in spite of a gallant resistance, prize to the boats of the *Pallas*. The action was hardly over, when two more French corvettes unexpectedly came down to rescue the *Tapageuse*, but were beaten off by the fire of her guns. While all this was going forward, Cochrane, who had remained with the *Pallas* at anchor by the river's mouth, was aware soon after daylight of three more sail making for the Garonne. These were soon discovered also to be French corvettes; and then the position of the *Pallas*, with but forty men aboard, became critical in the extreme. Without a moment's hesitation Cochrane sent his few hands aloft to tie up the furled sails with rope-yarn, and ordered them to

stand by with their knives. All was soon ready: the word was given to let fall; and in an instant the yarn was cut away, and down fell the whole cloud of the frigate's canvas together, as though not forty, but four hundred perfectly drilled men were aboard her. The sight was too much for the three corvettes. They turned and ran off along shore; and away started the defenceless *Pallas* in pursuit, while her handful of men, all grinning their broadest as we may guess, strained every nerve to sheet home. Had the Frenchmen noticed how slowly this was done they might have discovered the trick, but they were scared beyond all power of observation. Very soon the *Pallas* came up with one of the flying corvettes, and opened fire from her bow-guns. She could not have manned more for want of men, but these were amply sufficient. After half a dozen shots the French captain deliberately ran his ship ashore, and the crew, taking to the boats, made all haste for the land; had they made for the *Pallas* instead, they could not, by Cochrane's own admission, have failed to capture her. The stranded vessel having been dismasted by the shock, the *Pallas* ranged up alongside, and was engaged in completing the wreck by firing into her hull, when the other two corvettes came up to the rescue of their consort. Again the same trick was repeated, with the same result. The *Pallas* dashed straight at the nearest; and a second corvette was run ashore in desperation and dismasted. Leaving her to take her chance Cochrane was returning to the river in order to pick up his men, when he observed the third corvette making for the river likewise. Finding herself intercepted, she, too, was run ashore and aban-

doned; and thus three corvettes, mounting between them sixty-four guns, deliberately committed suicide before a defenceless frigate, through sheer fright at the fall of her sails. It is one of the curiosities of war.

A fortnight later the *Pallas* joined the squadron before Basque Roads, and stood in to reconnoitre the French fleet that lay at anchor therein. As she approached, a French frigate, the *Minerve*, and three brigs got under way, but, in spite of their superiority, declined an engagement, and took refuge under the shore batteries. After waiting for them for five hours, Cochrane completed his reconnaissance and wrote his report. It was a more fateful document than he imagined, for after enumerating the thirteen French vessels anchored in the roads, he proceeds forthwith with the sentence, "They may easily be burned." For the present, however, the French fleet was left unmolested, and Cochrane then applied himself to a new method of harassing the enemy by the destruction of the French semaphore signal-stations, which, being admirably organised along the whole length of the coast, kept the coasting-craft informed of all movements of British cruisers. One day sufficed for the demolition of a couple of stations; and, having thus broken the chain of the telegraph, he returned to the Isle d'Aix to reconnoitre the French fleet once more, and make a fresh attempt to bring the *Minerve* to action. Determined that she should not take refuge under the batteries a second time, Cochrane ran in close to them, and was rewarded by seeing the frigate come out to meet him with three brigs, as before, in support. The *Minerve* herself mounted forty guns against the thirty-four of the *Pallas*,

and the three brigs each sixteen more; but Cochrane, calmly awaiting them and watching his opportunity, dismantled one brig with a single broadside, and then turned to engage the rest. The difficulties of navigation prevented a continuous action, but after an hour's fighting the fire of the *Pallas* began to tell; and at last, by skilful manœuvring, Cochrane contrived to pour in two or three broadsides so destructive that the *Minerve* prepared to beat a retreat. But Cochrane was not the man to allow her to escape. Quickly, as fate would have it too quickly, for the *Minerve*, unobserved by him, had grounded on a shoal, he laid the *Pallas* alongside her, and fell on board his helpless antagonist with a crash that dismantled both vessels. In this position the *Pallas* poured in a last broadside with crushing effect; the French sailors fled below, leaving their captain, gallant man, alone on the deck. The *Minerve* was conquered, but she was not to be taken: at that moment two more French frigates bore down to her assistance; and the *Pallas*, herself a wreck, was compelled to make what sail she could and save herself. The *Kingfisher* (Captain Seymour) came down and took her in tow, and the engagement was over. But for the unfortunate grounding of the *Minerve* at the moment of collision, this would have been accounted one of the most brilliant of Cochrane's actions. The losses of the *Pallas* were one man killed, one officer and three men wounded; a sufficient proof of the skilful handling of the ship and the superb gunnery of the men. Let us before quitting the action take note of Captain Seymour of the *Kingfisher*, afterwards known as Admiral Sir George Seymour, for we shall before long find him again

at a far more critical time by Cochrane's side in these same Aix Roads.

Four days after the action the *Pallas* was sent home with a convoy, and on May 27th Cochrane found himself at Plymouth, at the close of a most brilliant cruise. His resource had proved itself to be inexhaustible, and his invention to be fertile in expedients even for the most unexpected contingencies. One small detail, too characteristic to be omitted, must be given as an example. Among other devices for the embarrassment of the French Government, the British resorted to the distribution of seditious proclamations among the French people. Every British captain on the coast was equipped with a number of these proclamations, but the difficulty was to distribute them. Cochrane's method was original enough. He made a bundle of proclamations fast to a kite, which was flown over the land with a slow match attached to it, which match, when burned to the end, consumed the retaining string and set the kite free to scatter proclamations broadcast. The device was eminently successful, and gave the French Government much annoyance, greatly to the satisfaction of Cochrane, who delighted in a prank of this kind. Yet neither for this, nor for the destruction of the signal-stations, nor for two brilliant actions, did he receive commendation from the Admiralty. Admiral Thornborough wrote with enthusiasm of the affair with the corvettes in the Garonne, and St. Vincent admitted that it called for the highest approbation; but the Admiralty gave no word of praise, nor penny of reward. The plot now began to thicken, for Cochrane was nearly ready with a new weapon against the obnoxious department.

CHAPTER IV

ELECTION TO PARLIAMENT—CRUISE OF THE "IMPERIEUSE"—ROSAS

1806–1809

SHORTLY after the return of the *Pallas* a General Election came in prospect, and Cochrane lost no time in proceeding to Honiton, where, with a large retinue of officers and seamen, who had volunteered to support him for the occasion, he made a triumphant entry into the town. The recollection of the ten-guinea fee paid to his supporters in the previous year was sufficiently fresh in the memory of the borough to secure his return by a large majority; but when, the contest over, his clients inquired what might be their reward for this great victory, they were informed that bribery was against Lord Cochrane's principles, and that they would not receive one farthing. Finding that no cash was to be obtained from the new member, his constituents begged that, at least, he would give them a public supper. "By all means," answered the guileless Cochrane; "it is a great satisfaction to me to know that so rational a display of patriotism has superseded a system which," etc., etc. So the public supper was duly given, and impartially enjoyed, without respect of political opinions,

by every soul in Honiton. Supporters and opponents met together with their wives, their friends, and their wives' friends; and the bill delivered to Cochrane for the entertainment amounted to twelve hundred pounds. For years he refused to pay it, until finally compelled by legal proceedings; and thereby hangs a tale which must engage our attention at a later stage. Meanwhile, we are free to express our astonishment that such an adept in the arts of war should have shown such simplicity in dealing with a borough election. But, in truth, Cochrane's weak points stand revealed in the whole of this ludicrous transaction. His cleverness was apt to overreach itself. He was over-prone to outwit others by some ingenious trick, veil the proceedings in a cloud of fine language, and hold himself aggrieved when others turned his weapons upon himself.

Having gained his seat, he used his influence at once to obtain promotion for his first-lieutenants of the *Speedy* and the *Pallas;* but being appointed in August to the command of the frigate *Imperieuse*, he went perforce to sea in her on an uneventful cruise which lasted until February, 1807. In April the dissolution of Parliament caused another General Election; and Cochrane, forsaking Honiton, betook himself to Westminster, where he offered himself to the electors as an independent candidate and a zealous friend of reform. Though opposed by Sheridan, he was returned at the head of the poll, with Sir Francis Burdett for his colleague; and therewith began his life-long intimacy with a man who, however vain and superficial as a politician, was to Cochrane unalterably the most loyal and generous of friends. Parliament opened on June 26th, and on

July 7th Cochrane brought forward his first motion, for a Committee to inquire into sinecures, places, and pensions held by members of the House of Commons. The motion was accepted in a modified form by Mr. Perceval; so that his first move in the House may be set down to his credit. Three days later he moved for papers to call attention to abuses in the navy, but was defeated without a division. He disclosed some shameful facts enough, but, like many new members, he wanted to do too much at one time. Moreover, and the fact must be sorrowfully noted once for all, as it lies at the root of his ultimate failure in the House of Commons, he betrayed, in spite of himself, the violence of his personal animosity against Lord St. Vincent.

The immediate result was that he was ordered on September 12th to rejoin the *Imperieuse*, and sail with her to Lord Collingwood's fleet in the Mediterranean. No character could be more at variance with Cochrane's than that of Collingwood; but the noble old sailor swiftly recognised Cochrane's merit, and appointed him to command a blockading squadron off the Ionian Islands. Most unfortunately for himself, Cochrane, on reaching his station, detected the officer whom he was about to supersede in the act of turning the blockade by fraudulent means to his own profit. The officer at once took the initiative, and reported to Collingwood that Cochrane was not fit to command a ship, much less a squadron. Collingwood, knowing nothing of the truth, naturally revoked his original order; and thus by the roguery of a British officer Cochrane lost his first chance of commanding a British squadron on active

service. Some time after Cochrane was able to explain matters to Collingwood; but the Admiral, though full of indignation and regret, could not then reopen the case nor remedy the injury. Cochrane was therefore told off to his old work of harassing the coasts of France and Spain. The mission was, of course, less welcome than the command of a squadron, but it was none the less an appreciation of his past services in the *Speedy;* so he determined, as he says, to spare no pains to merit the Admiral's good opinion. Let us, in passing, not fail to note the tact and judgment of Collingwood in giving him a free hand.

Of the innumerable petty actions and captures that kept Cochrane employed during the six succeeding months it is unnecessary, with our previous knowledge of his cruise in the *Speedy,* to say anything. In June, 1808, his instructions were altered, owing to the revolt of Spain against the imposition of Joseph Bonaparte upon the throne; and he was now bidden to give the Spaniards all possible assistance against the French. In spite of the mischief that he had done them in the preceding months, the Spaniards hailed him as a deliverer. Napoleon's troops were already in possession of several important posts, including the town of Barcelona, and by their harsh dealing had roused the bitterest hostility against themselves in Spain. As the *Imperieuse* cruised up the coast, boats came off to her in numbers to beg for help against their cruel and treacherous foes. It was not easy for a frigate to give much help ashore, and Cochrane could do no more than point out the advantage of destroying the roads by which French reinforcements

must advance, and of cutting off supplies from the French posts. He himself set the example by blowing up the roads wherever they ran along the face of the cliffs, destroying detached coast-batteries, and doing mischief in a hundred ways ashore, while always prohibiting the arrival of French supplies by sea. Indeed, on occasions of this kind he was in his element. Tied by no instructions, he could carry out any project which his ingenuity might devise, and, what was his special delight, combine an agitation for the cause of liberty with the active operations of war.

After a month or six weeks of this work, wherein he performed, as he says, the functions of an engineer-officer, it occurred to him to run across to the French coast and give the people a taste of the miseries which they were inflicting upon the Spaniards. The first step was to resume his former practice of demolishing the French semaphore signal-stations. In nine days he had destroyed six of them, generally overcoming some little resistance and disarming a battery in the process, and had made prize of the signal-books. As these books would have been of little value unless the French continued to use the same code, he was careful, while carrying them off, to scatter all other captured papers about in a half-burned condition. The French, deceived by the trick, continued their signals unaltered; and thus Collingwood, with the key placed in his hand by Cochrane, was able to read all information telegraphed down the coast, and keep himself well posted as to the movements, no less of his own, than of the French vessels. After a brief return to the fleet, which was then employed in blockading Toulon, Cochrane began

his depredations anew on the same ground. Signal-stations were destroyed, coasting-craft captured, and coast-batteries ruined with astonishing rapidity. The result was a regular panic on the French shore. French reinforcements, which were badly needed in Spain, were kept marching backwards and forwards along their own coasts in constant fear of an attack from the dreaded frigate, and thus, for all practical purposes, were put out of action. The success of this diversion, for such he intended it to be, and such undoubtedly it was, made the strongest impression upon Cochrane. We shall see before long how far he would have pushed this principle of harassing operations on a hostile coast had he been permitted, and ultimately how he vindicated the soundness of his opinion in South America. Meanwhile, there was one person who appreciated his exertions at their true value, and that was Collingwood.

After a short visit to the fleet, and a mission to Gibraltar with despatches (October 6th-29th), the *Imperieuse* returned to the Spanish coast and to the work of harassing the French about Barcelona. While there, he received information that the enemy had opened the siege of Rosas. Now Rosas lies on the road between Figueras, the northernmost post held by the French in Catalonia, and Barcelona, and consequently was a place of great strategic importance. For, if it could be held by the Spaniards, the French in Barcelona must be cut off and compelled to surrender. Fully alive to these considerations, Cochrane sailed for the bay of Rosas with all haste. On arriving there, on November 20th, he learned that just a fortnight before six thousand French troops had actually taken posses-

sion of the town and of the heights commanding the bay. They had, however, been driven out by the fire of two British ships, the *Excellent* and *Meteor*, whose captains had garrisoned the citadel and Fort Trinidad, the principal defence of the town, with British seamen and marines, and had repelled an assault delivered by General Reille. Thereupon the French had erected batteries for a regular siege, and had so far damaged Fort Trinidad as to cause the withdrawal of the British garrison. Such was the not very encouraging state of affairs when Cochrane undertook the defence of Rosas.

His first step was to endeavour to damage the French batteries as best he could by the fire of landed parties and the guns of the *Imperieuse*; but, though he succeeded in driving the French from their entrenchments before the citadel, he was unable, owing to their great elevation, to injure the batteries over against Fort Trinidad. The French now ceased to pay much attention to the ships, but redoubled their efforts against the forts, and with such success that the Spanish commander began to speak of surrender. Cochrane, however, undertaking to garrison Fort Trinidad with the marines of the *Imperieuse*, entreated him still to hold out. The occupation of Catalonia turned, as he saw, upon two principal points: whether the Spanish Junta at Gerona would spare a reinforcement to save Rosas; and whether Rosas could be held until that reinforcement arrived. As to the latter, Cochrane had already made up his mind. The castle of Trinidad was a stronghold of peculiar construction. It stood on a hillside with an easy descent to the sea, and consisted of three portions: first a fort fifty feet high next to the sea; behind, and adjoining this, a

second fort thirty feet higher; and behind this, again, a tower rising to the height of yet another thirty feet. The hill on which it stood was commanded by another height on which the French had established their batteries; but, owing to the elevation at which their guns were posted, it was impossible for them to breach the tower at a height of less than sixty feet from its base. In fact, to employ Cochrane's own simile, the relative positions of the two combatant parties may be grasped by imagining a small force to be stationed in Westminster Abbey, the apse, nave, and tower representing the three tiers of the fortress, and an enemy attacking the western towers from a cliff a hundred feet above them, and making a breach in the position of the great west window. In such a situation Cochrane judged that he could make it difficult for the French to carry the fortress by storm, even though he had no guns wherewith to answer the fire of their breaching batteries.

On November 24th, pursuant to his promise, he garrisoned the castle with fifty sailors and the whole of his marines, and set to work to improve its defences after his most original designs. It so happened that just at the height where the breach was a-making was the summit of a lofty interior arch, rising within the tower to a height of fifty feet from the ground. Cochrane broke in the crown of this arch, thus creating a chasm to engulf any storming-party that might mount the breach. Further, to make the descent the easier he constructed a huge wooden case, exactly like the hopper of a mill, at the entrance of the chasm, greasing the upper part with cook's slush, so that the enemy should not only

be unable to retain a hold, but rather travel with the greater velocity to the bottom. Once there, whether killed or not by the fall, they were helpless, for they could not get out. He then prepared trains for the ignition of the magazines in case evacuation should be forced upon him, and the first day's work was done.

Next day the French, greatly exasperated to find the castle reinforced from the *Imperieuse*, erected an additional battery on the cliff above it; and, firing always with beautiful accuracy, succeeded in making first a hole and then a breach in the tower. As fast as the French knocked the masonry down the sailors piled the fallen rubble up again, and being under shelter could ply their task without danger. Cochrane, incautiously exposing himself for a moment, was, however, struck in the face by a stone splinter which, to use his own description, literally forced his nose, which was a prominent feature, back into the cavity of his mouth. The wound caused him intolerable pain, but it did not abate his zeal for the defence, and ultimately, by the doctor's skill, the nose was restored to its original prominence. Notwithstanding the repair of the breach during the night, the French fire gained rapidly upon the defenders, and Cochrane was obliged to think of further defences against a sudden assault. He therefore threw up interior barricades with palisades, barrels, sand-bags, and so forth, and hung festoons of chains over the hopper and elsewhere; arming these chains, moreover, with large fish-hooks in such sort that a man once caught therein could hardly hope to escape before he should be shot. The preparation of these obstacles must have been a curious scene. To the old hands of

the *Speedy* and the *Pallas*, who remembered the blackened faces that took the *Gamo* and the trick that drove the corvettes to suicide in the Garonne, these contrivances, none the less effective because inspired by a kind of schoolboy's love of mischief, must have been entertaining enough; but it so happened that the garrison was on that day reinforced by fifty Irishmen from the Spanish army, who threw themselves into the humour of the siege with true native appreciation, and were hugely tickled with all that they saw about them. Not the least comical element, we may guess, was the appearance of the Commander-in-Chief, big, burly, and undefeated, with his nose crushed into his face and two terrific black eyes.

So passed the two first days of the siege. On the night of November 26th the French made a general attack on the town, and after some hard fighting carried it. The *Imperieuse* and the *Fame*, which was also in the harbour, opened fire on the victorious French, but failed to drive them out. Then came the dawn of the 27th, and with it two thousand Spanish troops from Gerona, characteristically too late. Having secured the town, the French renewed their efforts against the castle with such vigour that Cochrane, having lost three men, began to doubt the wisdom of prolonging the defence. The French fire, however, slackened on the 28th, and it was not until the 30th that the long-awaited assault was delivered. Long before daylight on that morning Cochrane was oppressed with a vague sense that all was not right in the castle of Trinidad; and finally, yielding to his presentiment, he rose from his bed to satisfy himself

by a tour of inspection. All was quiet, and he felt, as he says, ashamed of his weakness. A mortar, ready loaded, lay in position pointing towards the quarter from whence the attack must come; and, to divert his mind from the anxiety which tortured him, Cochrane fired it. The answer was a volley of musketry from the advancing enemy. Cochrane's presentiment had been correct, and the time was come. Gallantly enough the French planted their ladders and swarmed up to the breach; and then they stopped, for the chasm of the man-trap, just visible in the coming dawn, yawned wide before them. About forty of them who had gained the summit were instantly shot down: those below wavered for a moment, while the British redoubled their fire; and then the whole column, twelve hundred strong, retreated in a body, leaving fifty of their number dead behind them. They were scarcely gone, when another column appeared, with drums beating and colours flying, to be roughly handled in their turn, and to retreat, leaving the British triumphant. Cochrane had lost but three men killed in the whole affair.

The French now erected new batteries to prevent the boats of the *Imperieuse* from coming ashore, and concentrating all their efforts on the citadel, compelled it to capitulate on December 4th. Next day Cochrane, seeing that his retreat was now endangered, decided reluctantly to abandon the fortress, remaining himself until the last to fire the magazines. Unfortunately, through some accident, only one of the trains took effect, so that, instead of turning his back on a heap of ruins, he had the mortification to see the French flag flying

on the remains of the castle which he had so gallantly held.

It chanced that among the officers of the *Imperieuse* who served at the defence of Rosas was a young midshipman named Frederick Marryat, whom fate later ordained to be the historian of the navy in the twenty years' war with France. Although a novel cannot be reckoned strictly speaking as historical authority, yet there is in *Frank Mildmay* an anecdote of Cochrane so characteristic and so evidently true that we shall make no apology for transcribing it. The garrison of Rosas was employed, under Cochrane's direction, in burying the corpses of the French who had fallen in the assault, when the enemy suddenly opened fire upon them. "The captain [Cochrane] then ordered his men to run into the castle, which they instantly obeyed; while he himself walked leisurely along through a shower of musket-balls . . . As his aide-de-camp, I [Marryat] felt bound in honour, as well as duty, to walk by the side of my captain, fully expecting every moment that a ball would hit me where I should have been ashamed to show the scar. I thought this funeral pace, after the funeral was over, confounded nonsense; but my fire-eating captain never had run away from a Frenchman, and did not intend to begin then. I was behind him, making these reflections; and, as the shot began to fly very thick, I stepped up alongside of him and by degrees brought him between me and the fire. 'Sir,' said I, 'as I am only a midshipman, I do not care so much about honour as you do; and therefore, if it makes no difference to you, I'll take the liberty of getting under your lee.' He laughed and said, 'Mr. Mildmay, I did

not know you were here, for I meant that you should have gone with the others; but since you are out of your station, Mr. Mildmay, I will make that use of you which you so ingeniously proposed to make of me. My life may be of some importance here, but yours very little, and another midshipman can be had for the ship only for asking; so just drop astern, if you please, and do duty as a breastwork for me.'"

For the rest, the defence of Rosas found high favour with Collingwood, who, even before the receipt of Cochrane's report, wrote home warm commendation of "his heroic spirit and ability"; and added, with evident admiration, that "his resources for every exigency seem to have no end." The Admiralty, however, gave neither praise nor reward; and Cochrane's bitterness was naturally still further increased. He does not seem to have appreciated the value of eulogy from such a man as Collingwood, nor to have reflected that the neglect of the Admiralty was an insult to Collingwood no less than an injury to himself. We must not forget, in listening to the torrent of Cochrane's grievances, that Collingwood, one of the noblest men that ever served in the British navy, had borne, and was still bearing, always with pain but never without patience, even more shameful treatment at the hands of the Admiralty; and that, as a crowning indignity, the rewards that he had begged for his men, and the promotion which he had implored for his officers, had been refused after such an action as Trafalgar.

After leaving Rosas, the *Imperieuse* proceeded northward to St. Philou, where Cochrane was entreated by the Spanish commandant to come ashore and reconnoitre the position of the French troops towards Gerona. It

was a singular request for a soldier to make of a naval officer, but Cochrane's genius, as the Spaniards had discovered, was not bounded by the sea. He went ashore accordingly, decided that the strength of the French position precluded all hope of successful attack, gave what advice he could in the circumstances, and sailed south again to Barcelona. There he arrived in time to be present at an action fought on December 17th between forty thousand Spaniards, strongly posted, and ten thousand French who had marched to the relief of the garrison. Assuming, with the simplicity which so often puzzles us in a man of his insight, that the triumph of the Spaniards was certain, he went ashore to be a spectator of the victory. To his great surprise the Spanish army fled and the Spanish general with it, while he himself only with difficulty made good his escape to the frigate. This experience seems to have sickened him for the present of operations ashore; and he, therefore, returned to the more congenial occupation of cutting off the French supplies at sea. On December 30th he received intelligence of a convoy of eleven French vessels lying at anchor in Caldagues Bay, under the protection of shore-batteries and of a large body of troops. As the harbour was but half a mile wide, the convoy could not be attacked without bringing the *Imperieuse* within range of musketry; but with Cochrane such obstacles carried little weight. Standing into the bay, the *Imperieuse* dealt first with the two small war-vessels, a cutter of seven and a lugger of five guns, which were in charge of the convoy. These were soon sunk; and then came the turn of the batteries on shore, which had repeatedly struck the frigate during her

action with the ships. A party was landed to make a feint on the town, while a second party of sailors and marines dashed in between the town and the batteries. The French gunners, fearful, as Cochrane had foreseen, of being cut off from their comrades in the town, abandoned the batteries with all haste; and the British, without the loss of a man, brought off or destroyed the nine guns, blew up the magazine, and carried off the convoy in triumph. The following days were employed in raising and repairing the sunken war-vessels, one of which was presently to be sent to Collingwood with the following account of the action. 2*nd January* 1809. —"My lord, having received information of two French vessels of war, and a convoy of victuallers for Barcelona being in this port, I have the honour to inform your lordship that they are all—amounting to thirteen sail—in our possession. The French have been driven from the tower of Caldagues with the loss of nine cannon, which they had mounted, or were mounting, in the batteries."

Cochrane, it must be noted, is never terse with his pen, except in making official report of his own exploits. Collingwood forwarded the letter to the Admiralty, with a brief comment that, from him, signified very much: "His lordship's good services in aid of the Spaniards and in annoyance of the enemy could not be exceeded."

The rest of the month of January was employed in eternally harassing the French troops, and demolishing of the French batteries wherever they could be reached on the coast. The mere tale of guns captured, or destroyed, in these forays must be reckoned by the score; and though it was not often

practicable to inflict on the French great loss of men, yet occasionally large bodies of troops were brought within range of the frigate's guns and not suffered to escape without serious damage. It is well known that the gunnery of the English navy won for it its victories in this long war, but that of the *Imperieuse* was evidently of peculiar excellence. The most notable fact, however, in the history of these operations is that Cochrane accomplished all this mischief with never more than trifling loss, and, as a rule, with no loss whatever. Reckless even to bravado of his own life, he was scrupulously careful of his men, husbanding them with truly Scottish thrift; and thus he was able always to dispense with reinforcements, and to preserve the independence of his command.

From the continued sequence of his success he now aspired to higher things. If he could hold large bodies of French troops paralysed on their coast with a single frigate, and this, by Collingwood's willing admission, he had done, what might he not accomplish with a squadron of three or four? To such a command he held himself to be now entitled; and, accordingly, he resolved to go home and obtain it. The ostensible reason that he gave for his return was the necessity of recruiting his health, which might well have suffered under the wear and tear of the past few months; but the more urgent motive, by his own confession, was a desire to return to his place in the House of Commons and expose the flagrant dishonesty and peculations of the Mediterranean Admiralty Courts. In other words, he designed to call attention to the neglect and ill-treatment from which he had suffered, and to obtain what satisfaction he could.

He had prepared a plan of operations against the French on their Mediterranean seaboard, a plan which, as he to the last maintained, would, if adopted, have accomplished far more cheaply and effectually the results achieved by the Peninsular War. If the Government would give him a squadron wherewith to prosecute it, well and good; he would take the command and do his best. If not, he had an armful of abuses and grievances ready, and would make things unpleasant for the Government. Above all, if it were humanly possible, he would combine injury both to the Government and the French. Such, as may easily be seen from a careful perusal of his own narrative, were his plans for the future. We shall presently see, when the choice was offered to him between harassing the Government and harassing the French, which occupation he in his heart preferred.

After rejoining Admiral Thornborough's squadron for a short time on January 30th, he obtained the necessary leave to return home. So far, in spite of Collingwood's commendations, he had received no word of thanks or praise, only a rebuke for having expended more sails, stores, and ammunition than any other captain in the service. Such a reception was enough to sicken the heart of any man who was conscious that he had done good work; but, after all, clerks are clerks, and remain clerks to all generations. It is not so very long since the commander of one of the regiments which were cut to pieces at Maiwand was officially asked to explain why he had not returned into store the cases of the cartridges expended in the action. More recently still a British battalion was sent to chastise an Indian hill-tribe; an expedition which, though full of fatigue and

hardship, was so skilfully managed that the hillmen were brought to their knees at the cost of a single British soldier killed. The battalion was rewarded with the privilege of replacing its ruined clothing and equipment at its own expense. Still there is always the clerk's side of the question to be considered, even in an office so corrupt as the Admiralty of those days; but this, unhappily, Cochrane was never able to see. It was with a heart full of bitterness against the Admiralty and all its clerks that he returned, to learn from the lips of the First Lord that his time at last was come.

CHAPTER V

AIX ROADS

1809

On March 21st, 1809, very shortly after his arrival at Plymouth, Cochrane received a cordial letter from Lord Mulgrave, the First Lord of the Admiralty, inviting him to give advice as to a certain great enterprise then pending. The letter was immediately followed by an urgent summons to Whitehall. The explanation of this unusual stir was as follows. Early in the year Lord Gambier had been appointed to command the squadron blockading the French fleet in Brest. Towards the end of February, however, the French had contrived to slip out unobserved, without leaving the slightest clue to their destination. Gambier then returned to Plymouth, sending Admiral Duckworth to hunt for the French. Duckworth sailed first to Cadiz and thence to Madeira, but could find no trace of the enemy at either port. It was then discovered that the French had first set free the squadron which was under blockade at L'Orient, had next proceeded to the Isle d'Aix, where they had liberated the Rochefort squadron, and had then prepared to sail with their united strength to the West Indies. Finding, however, that Admiral Stopford, though

with a fleet of but half their own strength, was near them, they put back first into Basque Roads and then into Aix Roads, where they were blockaded, first by Stopford with seven, and later by Gambier with twelve sail of the line, besides smaller vessels. Such was the state of affairs when Cochrane anchored at Plymouth. The attempt of the French to sail to the West Indies, though for the present foiled by the vigilance of Stopford, gave the British Government great uneasiness. The British fleet was weary of blockading; and, at best, a fleet blockaded is not a fleet destroyed. Cochrane, after reconnaissance of a French fleet in these same Aix Roads three years before, had written the words, "They may easily be burned." The Admiralty consulted various officers as to the employment, therein hinted at, of fire-ships; but had received from all a discouraging reply. Lord Gambier wrote that it was "a horrible and unchristian mode of warfare," and that the enterprise was "hazardous if not desperate." In truth the navy was not enamoured of fire-ships; even such men as Collingwood abominated them. They were ranked in the same category with rockets, as a weapon little less dangerous to friend than foe. Still the Admiralty was so firmly determined upon an attack by fire-ships that it warned Gambier to expect the arrival of suitable vessels and combustibles, and then turned to Cochrane, who had originally suggested the plan, to take charge of its execution. Thus his great ambition, to be consulted by the chief of his department on a great naval operation, was fulfilled at last.

On his arrival at the Admiralty Lord Mulgrave laid the adverse opinion of Lord Gambier before him, and then asked him point-blank to detail the original scheme

prepared in 1806, or any other that he might now prefer to it. Cochrane parried the request by observing that as so many of his seniors had pronounced against an attack by fire-ships, the adoption of his suggestions could not fail to place him in an invidious position. Lord Mulgrave overruled the objection at once. "This is no time," he said in effect, "for professional etiquette. The Admiralty is bent on striking a decisive blow before the French fleet can find an opportunity of slipping away to the West Indies. Lord Gambier declines to take the responsibility for the attack, and the Government is not prepared to take the risk of failure." On this Cochrane, by his own admission, made up his mind to have nothing to do with the execution of the plan; not because he had the least misgiving as to its success, but because it was clear to him that the Ministers wanted above all things a victory, and that the admiral of their choice had told them plainly that he would not be answerable for the failure of their chosen design. In plain words, he was unwilling to destroy the French fleet lest he should benefit the Tory party; as if the matter were not far more of national than of ministerial import, and as if the Ministry had not risen above party considerations by inviting its bitterest opponent to perform a great national service. He therefore detailed his plan at length, and left it freely at the disposal of the Admiralty, but declined to put it personally into execution; alleging, for one reason, that he was unwilling to incur professional jealousy, and, for another, that the state of his health imperatively demanded repose.

For that day the matter ended there, but on the morrow Lord Mulgrave sent for Cochrane again, and said

to him plainly: "My lord, you must go. I will make it all right with Lord Gambier. Your own confidence in the result, I confess, took me by surprise, but it has increased my belief that all that you anticipate will be accomplished. Make yourself easy about the jealous feeling of senior officers; I will so manage it that the *amour propre* of the fleet shall be satisfied." Cochrane asked for time to think the matter over, and wrote again to Lord Mulgrave declining the command, but at the same time adding, that it had ever been a maxim with him not to shrink from duty to his country, under any circumstances however disadvantageous to himself; and that if officers, his seniors, could not be found to put the project into execution, he would waive his objections. Lord Mulgrave construed this reply as equivalent to an acceptance of the command of the attack, and he was right. For the time patriotism and love of active service had prevailed in Cochrane over hatred of the Government.

The matter being settled, preparations were energetically pushed forward; and Cochrane, without waiting for the craft that were to serve as fire-ships, sailed with the *Imperieuse* to Aix Roads. He was hardly gone when a second letter reached the Admiralty from Gambier, still declining responsibility for the proposed attack, and raising new objections wholly irreconcilable with his first letter. In fact, Gambier not only hated the very name of fire-ships, but, though approved by previous actions a gallant officer, he had now lost his nerve, and shrank from the responsibility of taking any vigorous step whatever. Cochrane, however, was the bearer of a letter which was imperative as to the attack; and Gambier, to do him justice, received it with a good grace. He wel-

comed Cochrane on his arrival with great civility, laid the Admiralty's letter before him without reserve, and in general showed him both loyalty and goodwill. But the fleet was not so well pleased. "Why," asked every one, "was Cochrane sent out? We were ready; why did not the Admiral let us do it?" Matters reached a climax when Admiral Harvey, the second in command, came on board the flagship and abused Lord Gambier to his face, on his own quarterdeck, in a fashion that is almost incredible; and indeed Harvey was shortly afterwards dismissed the service for his language on this occasion. While disclaiming all personal feeling against Cochrane, he said that his appointment to this duty was an insult to the fleet; he had himself volunteered to perform the service, and if any officer were preferred to himself, he would strike his flag and resign his command so soon as the affair was over. Then came a furious invective against Gambier as the most useless Commander-in-Chief ever seen, and the biting conclusion that if Nelson had been there he would not have anchored in Basque Roads at all, but would have gone in straight at the enemy.

This was not a pleasant beginning for Cochrane. He blamed Lord Mulgrave for not fulfilling his undertaking to satisfy the *amour propre* of the fleet; but he must have known that Lord Mulgrave, in making so foolish a promise, had bound himself to a task beyond the power of any man. The truth is that Gambier's fleet was in a very unsatisfactory state. Though lacking nerve to risk the lives of his men, the Admiral was inordinately busy as to the salvation of their souls; being, in fact, a Low-Churchman of the aggressive type. That

this, or indeed any monomania, should have claimed its victims in the fleet during the weary blockades and interminable cruises of the great war is perhaps not surprising; but in Gambier's case it was a great misfortune. "I don't like your preaching soldier," said Napoleon; and, Cromwell and Gordon notwithstanding, Napoleon was probably right. Gambier in Basque Roads was unfortunately all Bible and no sword. Naturally he distributed his patronage to such as professed like feelings with himself: naturally unscrupulous men sought to gain his favour by affecting to share his religious prejudices; and naturally honest men, of what faith soever, objected to religious orthodoxy as a road to naval preferment. The result was that the fleet's efficiency was greatly impaired by division into two bitterly hostile factions; while Gambier, when he should have been beating the French, was ordering musters of ships' companies for catechetical examination, and sending tracts to the captains for distribution to the crews. Cochrane, on receiving his tale of tracts, declined to issue one of them to his men, but sent specimens to Cobbett together with a description of the schism in the fleet. Cobbett's vigorous pen, of course, turned such material to telling account; and hereby Cochrane added yet more to the number of his enemies within the service and without. From one whose health imperatively demanded repose, and whose feelings shrank from provoking the ill-will of his seniors, this letter to Cobbett seems a little ill-timed.

The divisions in the fleet were yet in a sense favourable to Cochrane, in forcing him to depend on himself, no small gain to a man who worked best single-handed.

On the very evening of his arrival he reconnoitred the French fleet in Aix Roads, and, this done, urged Lord Gambier not to wait for fire-ships from England, but to utilise for the purpose some transports which by chance were lying at the British anchorage. Gambier gladly consented, and Cochrane, leaving the equipment of the fire-ships to others, gave the whole of his own attention to the fitting of explosion-vessels; for his plan was not that of a mere attack by fire-ships, but by fire-ships preceded by floating mines. The floors of these explosion-vessels were first strengthened by logs wedged together as tightly as possible, so as to present the maximum of resistance. On these were placed old casks filled with fifteen hundred barrels of gunpowder, all tightly bound round with hempen cables; and on these again were laid several hundred shells covered, in their turn, by about three thousand hand-grenades. The whole was finally compressed into a solid mass by means of wedges and sand, and therewith the infernal vessel was complete.

On the 10th of April the vessels designed for fire-ships arrived from England, and Cochrane forthwith pressed Lord Gambier to permit the attack to be made on that same night. Here is a beautiful instance of the delicate detail of his combinations. The French could have no doubt as to the purpose for which the newly-arrived vessels were designed, and would be sure on the morrow to make preparations to receive them; but they would never dream that other fire-ships had already been provided, and would feel safe enough at least for that night. Lord Gambier, however, refused his consent on the ground that the fire-ships might perhaps be boarded, and

their crews murdered by the French. It is a sorry task to make an omelette for one who recoils from the breakage of eggs. In vain Cochrane represented that an explosion-vessel, under his own command, would sail in advance of the fire-ships and take the most perilous place; and that he was not only himself prepared to run the risk, but could count upon two volunteers not belonging to the fleet, Lieutenant Bissel and his brother Basil, who, though no more than his guests, were ready to accompany him. Gambier's only reply was that if Cochrane chose to rush on self-destruction that was his own affair, but that he, as Admiral, would not allow the crews of the fire-ships to be placed in palpable danger. A great opportunity, on which Cochrane's foresight had counted, was therefore lost. The French now struck their topmasts and unbent the sails of their line-of-battle ships, so as to leave no inflammable matter aloft, armed and stationed their boats (seventy-three in number) to tow off attacking fire-ships, and altered the formation of the fleet itself. The line-of-battle ships, ten in all, were disposed in a double line, with four frigates half a mile in front of them; while covering the whole was a gigantic boom, forming two sides of a triangle, with the apex pointing towards the British fleet. Each wing of this boom was half a mile long, and the structure itself was formed of large spars, moored at intervals along the whole length by heavy anchors. So confident were the French of their security that they dressed their fleet with flags to show their contempt of the British.

On the 11th of April the wind blew hard into the roads with a heavy sea; and as weather made little difference to Cochrane's plans, and the tide was

favourable, he obtained Lord Gambier's permission to make his attack on that night. The *Imperieuse* then moved up within the roads, and anchored at a point about three miles distant from the French fleet, with the *Aigle*, *Unicorn*, and *Pallas* frigates close at hand; while Lord Gambier with the fleet remained in their original position, some eight miles from the *Imperieuse*. At nightfall the officers in command of fire-ships assembled on board the flagship to receive their last instructions. Three explosion-vessels, in all, had been made ready; whereof one was held in reserve and made fast to the stern of the *Imperieuse*, a second was placed under the charge of a Lieutenant Johnson with Marryat as his assistant, and the third and greatest was commanded by Cochrane in person, accompanied by Lieutenant Bissel and a crew of four volunteers. It was nearly nine o'clock when he put off silently through the darkness to the attack. The wind had now increased to a gale, and the tide was flowing fast, so that the huge floating torpedo soon reached the estimated position of the advanced French frigates. The night was dark as pitch, and nothing could be seen: Marryat's ship, in fact, ran full tilt on to the boom before those aboard her knew where they were; but Cochrane, judging his time and position as best he might, presently ordered Bissel and his four men into the gig, and kindled the port-fires with his own hand. Then jumping into the boat, he bade the men pull for their lives. Pull they did, and with a will, for the fuses were reckoned to burn but twelve minutes, and wind and tide were now against the boat. With all their efforts, they made but little way. We can imagine the awful flight of the minutes in

that desperate struggle against gale and flood. Five minutes were past, six minutes, and then came a gigantic flash and a roar. The fuses had played them false, and the great floating mine was fired. The sky above them blazed scarlet with the glare; the air around them was alive with shells, rockets, grenades, and the timbers of the shattered vessel; the water seethed with spars shaken from the boom; and behind them the sea rose in a huge wave, which suddenly lifted the boat on its crest and as suddenly dropped it into a vast trough, upon which the waters closed like a whirlpool. Nevertheless the skill of the boat's crew availed to pluck them in a few minutes from their peril, and then all once more was silence and darkness, and the little forlorn hope could pull back in peace over the angry, bubbling waters to the lights of the *Imperieuse*. Presently the scene was lit up once more; two fire-ships passed the boat, and sped in full blaze over the spot where the boom had been moored, a salutary sign; another passed, the *Mediator*, not yet kindled, steering for the French fleet; and then rose the roar of guns from the French line-of-battle ships, firing in the direction of the explosion, and therefore on their own advanced frigates. Evidently there was confusion among the enemy.

On returning to the *Imperieuse* for his second explosion-vessel, Cochrane found, to his great vexation, that she had been cut adrift, a fire-ship having come down on her instead of on the enemy, and that the *Imperieuse* herself had narrowly escaped destruction. Indeed the fire-ships, for the most part, were grossly mismanaged, so much so that out of twenty only four reached the enemy's position, and even these did no damage. But

this was comparatively speaking a small matter, for Cochrane had reckoned upon them to spread not so much destruction as panic. If, he had argued, the attack be opened by explosion-vessels and followed up by fire-ships, the French will certainly take every fire-ship for an explosion-vessel, and will be afraid to go near them. As usual he was right. The glare of the burning vessels showed that the enemy's fleet was in hopeless confusion, though no one could yet guess how terrible had been the panic among them. When the morning of the 12th of April dawned, thirteen French ships lay helplessly aground. They had cut their cables in panic terror, and lay now, by the fall of the tide, on their bilges, with their bottoms exposed to shot, defenceless, at the mercy of Lord Gambier.

At six o'clock Cochrane, perceiving the hopeless situation of the ships nearest to him, signalled to inform the Admiral. The signal was responded to by the answering pennant, that is to say, to use the language of correspondence, by a bare acknowledgment of receipt. An hour later he signalled, "All the enemy's ships but two are aground." Again the answering pennant was hoisted, but the fleet remained motionless. Reflecting that the Admiral, twelve miles away from the scene of action, could not be aware of the real state of affairs, he signalled, "The enemy's ships can be destroyed," then again, "Half the fleet can destroy the enemy," and finally, "The frigates alone can destroy the enemy"; but always and unchangeably came for sole reply the answering pennant. It was now nine o'clock; the tide was rising, and the French were busy lightening their ships, even by the sacrifice of their guns, in order

to get them afloat. Cochrane made a last signal, "The enemy is preparing to heave off," got up his anchor, and moved the *Imperieuse* closer to the French, anchoring again just out of range of a battery on the Isle d'Oléron, At eleven o'clock, the fleet weighed, and Cochrane thought that at last the Admiral had made up his mind to attack; but, to his amazement, the fleet dropped anchor again while still seven or eight miles distant from the French fleet, and a single bomb-vessel alone was sent forward to bombard the stranded ships.

Seeing plainly that Gambier would not attack of his own will, Cochrane resolved to force him. Noon was past; one French three-decker, the *Océan*, was already afloat, and four others were straining every nerve to heave off. Cochrane quietly hove the anchor of the *Imperieuse* atrip, and without venturing to make sail lest he should be recalled, drifted in stern-foremost on the tide with his solitary frigate to the attack. Passing by the forts out of range, he made sail to engage the nearest French vessel that seemed about to escape, and signalled "In want of assistance"; but being fired at by one of the stranded ships, the *Calcutta*, he anchored in such a position as to pour his broadside into her, and at the same time to play with his bow-guns on the sterns of two more stranded vessels, the *Aquilon* and *Varsovie*. Then, at last, ships began to arrive from the British fleet, the *Valiant* and *Revenge*, seventy-fours, and the *Unicorn*, *Aigle*, *Indefatigable*, and *Pallas* frigates. Marryat has drawn a fine picture of the approach of one of these line-of-battle ships; how she took up her position and anchored with beautiful accuracy under the fire of the forts; and how when sails had been furled and yards

squared as carefully as though she were at Spithead, the men came down from aloft to their guns, and poured in a fire which would have delighted Nelson's heart. Before the reinforcements had arrived, the *Calcutta* was abandoned by her officers and crew, and boarded by a boat from the *Imperieuse*. At half-past three the *Imperieuse* ceased firing, the men being thoroughly exhausted, and Cochrane himself hardly able to stand from fatigue. The rest of the ships continued the action, and before dusk the *Aquilon* and *Varsovie*, line-of-battle ships, were captured, while the *Tonnerre*, a seventy-four, was abandoned and set on fire by her crew. The *Calcutta* was also set on fire, and with the explosion of her magazine, the day's work came to an end.

Before daybreak on the following day a signal was made for the recall of the British ships that had taken part in the action. They therefore got under way at four o'clock, having first set fire to the *Aquilon* and *Varsovie*. But there were still two French ships aground, namely, the *Foudroyant* and the *Cassard*, which, though they had escaped the fate of all the rest in the first panic of the explosion, had tried to run up the Charente, when the English came down, and were now stranded in the channel. These Cochrane determined, in spite of the signal, to attack. As the *Indefatigable* passed him on her way back to the Admiral, he hailed her captain to ask if he would stand by him; but the appeal was either unheard or unnoticed. Captain Seymour, however, of the *Pallas* (the same Captain Seymour whom we met before in the *Kingfisher*) took the initiative by asking if he should stand by the *Imperieuse;* and therewith the *Pallas* anchored, and four brigs

followed her example. Every effort was then made to repair the *Imperieuse*, which had suffered not a little from the fire of the *Calcutta* on the previous day, and make her ready for speedy action; while the *Foudroyant* and *Cassard*, having thrown everything overboard, were pressing sail to escape up the Charente. But before anything could be done, the signal for recall was repeated from the flagship. "The enemy can be destroyed," answered Cochrane. No notice was taken of his signal, but presently a boat brought him a letter from the Admiral. "You have done your part so admirably, that I will not suffer you to tarnish it by attempting impossibilities," it began; and it ended, *first*, with an order for Cochrane to rejoin the fleet as soon as possible, that he might help in the preparation of despatches; *secondly*, with an intimation that five small vessels had been despatched to join him, if he should choose to make further attempts on the stranded ships; and *thirdly*, with another order to come back to the flagship so soon as the tide turned. What was to be done with such a Commander-in-Chief? Cochrane construed the letter as giving him the option of attacking if he chose. "We *can* destroy the ships that are on shore," he wrote, "which I hope your lordship will approve of."

So the 13th of April was wasted in inaction; but the dawn of the 14th found the enemy in the same position. Three of them were unloading their guns into lighters, so that their destruction could be accomplished by the smallest vessel; but again the signal for recall was flying from the flagship. In vain Cochrane signalled for permission to attack; the recall repeated was the only

answer. Then came a second letter from Lord Gambier, to say that he must insist on seeing Cochrane before he closed his despatches, and had therefore sent an officer to relieve him in his present service. Once again there was an ambiguous sentence: "I wish you to join me as soon as possible, that you may convey Sir Harry Neale (flag-captain) to England, who will be charged with my despatches, or you may return to the service where you are." There was, however, a direct order to return, which could not be disobeyed; and Cochrane accordingly repaired on board the flagship. Then ensued a stormy scene. He told the Admiral that the hesitation in destroying the helpless ships ashore could only be explained by the fact that he had been employed in preference to senior officers in the original attack; and he therefore begged him as a friend, for the honour of the fleet, to send in Admiral Stopford, of whom there could be no possible jealousy, to finish the work. Gambier was not a little taken aback by this abrupt address, and not unpardonably showed his displeasure. He himself had never been within six miles of the scene of action, and being evidently under the impression that all was going as well as possible, he could not understand that any one should be discontented. "If," he answered, "you throw blame upon what has been done, it will appear like arrogantly claiming all the merit to yourself." Cochrane assured him that he had no such idea, and that he had no wish but to accomplish the destruction of the French fleet, with which he had been entrusted by the Admiralty. Lord Gambier, thereupon, cut matters short by giving him written orders to convey Sir Harry Neale immediately to England with despatches; and on

the following morning, accordingly, the *Imperieuse* sailed for Plymouth.

Such, by Cochrane's own account, was the close of his share in the action of Aix Roads, or, as it is more commonly miscalled, Basque Roads. That a man coming red-hot out of action, strung to a high pitch after three days of incessant labour and excitement, and filled with all the bitterness of a great opportunity lost, should have spoken hastily and rashly to a supine commander-in-chief is no matter for surprise, and hardly perhaps in the circumstances matter for blame. If Gambier had had his deserts, he would have been dismissed the service. It was not only practicable but easy for him to have annihilated the French fleet, but he deliberately neglected to do so. It is certain that, but for Cochrane's daring initiative in the *Imperieuse*, he would not have followed up the attack of the fire-ships at all. Whether it was want of nerve, or weakness of character, or sheer ignorance of the operations which he was conducting, or a combination of all three that dictated his extraordinary apathy it is impossible to say. French naval historians have summed up his conduct in the single contemptuous word *mollesse;* and to that *mollesse*, and to nothing else, they ascribe the escape of their fleet from annihilation, for, by their own confession, the panic that followed the explosion of Cochrane's floating mine was simply indescribable. The general feeling in the British fleet, also, was not kindly towards Gambier; it had been sore when Cochrane arrived to do the Admiral's duty for him, but it was furious when the Admiral failed to follow up Cochrane's success. As for Cochrane, he was beside himself. It is true that, though it was no fault of his,

neither fire-ships nor explosion-vessels had actually done the harm that was expected of them, for not a flame of the one nor a projectile of the other had even touched the enemy. But, on the other hand, the panic upon which he had counted had been far more destructive than either, if Gambier would but have allowed his captains to do the work as they were ready to do it. It would seem as though Gambier had accepted Cochrane's mission as a matter outside his province, and his operations as to be performed irrespective of the fleet; and hence the sting of Cochrane's heated phrase, that the destruction of the enemy's fleet had been entrusted to him, a post-captain, by the Admiralty. Nevertheless all would yet have gone well with Cochrane but for his own folly.

NOTE.—It is perhaps worth while to note that an exact precedent for Cochrane's attack is to be found in the destruction of the bridge thrown by Alexander of Parma over the Scheldt at the siege of Antwerp in 1585. The projector was an Italian named Gianibelli. (Motley's *History of the United Netherlands*, ch. v.)

CHAPTER VI

THE GAMBIER COURT-MARTIAL—PARLIAMENT—THE STOCK EXCHANGE TRIAL

1809–1817

ON his arrival in England Cochrane was deservedly received by the public as a hero, and was presently rewarded by the Government with the knighthood of the Bath, a distinction rarely conferred in those days upon a captain. Lord Gambier's despatch, though utterly misleading in most respects, was highly complimentary to his services; and indeed it may be questioned whether the Admiral's mistakes were not due rather to ignorance than to malice. Thus the credit of leading the attack and of breaking the boom was attributed to the captain of the fire-ship *Mediator*, which was foolish as well as untrue; but Cochrane's advance in the *Imperieuse* was described as a service "which could not be exceeded by any feat of valour hitherto achieved by the British navy." The Government was, of course, delighted on all grounds with the victory, which virtually extinguished French resistance at sea. Moreover, in addition to the four ships destroyed on the 12th of April, another had been wrecked and a sixth burned by its crew since Cochrane's

return to England. The Ministry therefore decided to ask Parliament for a vote of thanks to Gambier and his fleet.

Then Cochrane did a very unwise thing. He went to Lord Mulgrave and told him that as a Member of Parliament he felt it to be his duty to oppose the vote of thanks, on the ground that Lord Gambier, so far from having earned thanks, had neglected his duty in failing to destroy the entire French fleet. Lord Mulgrave naturally entreated him to abstain from such a proceeding alike for his own sake and for the sake of every one, assuring him, at the same time, that his name would be included in the vote of thanks and full justice done to him for his share in the success. Cochrane would hear nothing of this. His duty to his constituents, he said, forbade his acquiescence in a public misrepresentation. As a naval officer he offered no comment on Lord Gambier's conduct, but as member for Westminster he condemned it. Lord Mulgrave at once tore this sophism to shreds, telling him plainly that the public would not discriminate between Cochrane the post-captain and Cochrane the Member of Parliament. Shortly after Lord Mulgrave again sent for him, and again warned him of the storm that he would raise about his own head, adding, fairly enough: "If you are on service you cannot be in your place in Parliament. Now, my lord, I will put under your orders three frigates, with *carte blanche* to do whatever you please on the enemy's coast in the Mediterranean. I will further get you permission to go to Sicily and embark on board your squadron my own regiment, which is stationed there. You know how to make use

of them." Then Cochrane made the greatest mistake of his life. He said that the country would construe his acceptance of the offer as a bribe to hold his peace, and there and then declined. It is such perversity as this that drives Cochrane's warmest admirers to despair. If on public grounds he disapproved (as he well might) of Lord Gambier's conduct on service, the straightforward course, however invidious, was to prosecute him before a court-martial; not to attack him before an inexpert body like the House of Commons, where the accused could have no opportunity of defending himself, and the tribunal was utterly incompetent to pronounce judgment. If, again, he wished to do the greatest possible service to his country, his obvious duty was to accept the command offered to him,—the very object which he had hoped to gain when he had left the Mediterranean only a few weeks before,—and beat the French till they could stand no more. And this was the course prescribed not less by wisdom than by patriotism. With a squadron and a small land-force he could have rendered such service and achieved such reputation as would have enabled him to dictate his own terms to Admiralty and Ministry alike. He would have been stronger in his power to abolish abuses, remedy grievances, and institute reforms than a dozen members of the House of Commons. But the truth is that Cochrane was, for the moment, less intent on defeating the French than on embarrassing the Government. Though he might disclaim personal feeling against Gambier as a naval officer, he showed, and indeed took no pains to conceal, his personal animus against the Government as a politician.

Lord Gambier, on hearing of Cochrane's intentions,

naturally demanded a court-martial; and the Admiralty then called upon Cochrane to state the grounds of his objection to the vote of thanks. This request he interpreted as an invitation to become prosecutor in the court-martial; which in truth was the only position that he could logically assume, and that which, if his action were prompted by zeal for the service, he should have originally undertaken. He evaded the issue by referring the Admiralty to the log-books of the fleet as containing incriminatory matter sufficient; an answer which cost him dear.

The court-martial now resolved itself into a trial of strength between Cochrane and the Government. With incredible thoughtlessness, and worse than thoughtlessness, he had elected to fight his battle as a politician instead of as a naval expert, and thereby given his adversaries the choice of weapons. The issue being not naval but political, the Government stuck at no shift, however shameful, to ensure victory. Gambier's defence of his inaction rested on three principal points; that the safety of the fleet would have been imperilled by the fire of the French shore-batteries, by want of water for secure navigation, and by the fire of the stranded vessels. As Gambier in his first letter had described the batteries to be no obstacle; as, moreover, the French charts showed abundance of water to float line-of-battle ships; and as, finally, the stranded vessels had disembarked their guns to enable them to be floated, it is sufficiently obvious that acquittal would be by no means a result to be easily compassed. In such cases, however, evidence must necessarily be followed on a chart; and it was on clever falsification of charts, and

misplacement of the stranded vessels as marked thereon, that Gambier's defence was based. Cochrane, of course, was a principal witness, and in giving his evidence relied on a captured French chart; but this was set aside by the court, and the forged charts submitted by the defence accepted in its stead. Cross-examination would have exposed the falsehood of these charts without difficulty; but Cochrane was not permitted to cross-examine, nor even to be present at the examination of witnesses. As prosecutor he could have claimed these privileges as his right; but he had refused to prosecute, and must take the consequences. Even so, however, the self-contradiction of Gambier's witnesses was so glaring that it could not have been overlooked, except by a court that was already resolved to acquit him. Moreover, the evidence of Captain Seymour, given with great plainness and fearlessness, showed unanswerably that, say the charts what they might, the movements of his own ship had established both the existence of ample water for the navigation of the fleet, and the absence of any danger either from forts or stranded ships. No testimony of this kind was of the slightest avail. Nothing in such a court could be made to tell against the Admiral. Log-books, as well as charts, were tampered with and garbled for the defence; while a certain disorder in the log-books of the *Imperieuse* was made to tell heavily against the prosecution. Eventually, after the trial had lasted with occasional intervals from the 26th of July to the 9th of August, Lord Gambier was triumphantly acquitted. The whole story is repulsive and unclean to the last degree. Cochrane calls it "a naval study for all time," but this is unjust. It is a political and not a naval study; and it was through

Cochrane's fault that his noble service was defiled by the fighting of a political contest in the cabin of a line-of-battle ship.

From that day forward Cochrane's prospects in the service were ruined. The preparations for the Walcheren Expedition were going forward at the time when the court-martial took place, and Cochrane offered a plan for the destruction of the French fleet and the dockyard in the Scheldt. The plan was rejected. He then asked leave to rejoin the *Imperieuse*, which was under the charge of an acting captain in the Scheldt. Permission was twice refused. He therefore turned to Parliamentary business, and in January, 1810, moved for the minutes of Lord Gambier's court-martial, undertaking to prove partiality in the court and injustice in the judge-advocate. In the course of his speech he complained that there had been no prosecution in the trial. "Why," was Mr. Perceval's unanswerable retort, "was not the noble lord himself the prosecutor?" The general sense of the House was, naturally and soundly, against re-opening the court-martial as a matter outside its jurisdiction. Cochrane's motion was lost by one hundred and seventy-one to nineteen; Perceval then moved the vote of thanks to Lord Gambier, which, in spite of Cochrane's protest, was carried by one hundred and sixty-one to thirty-nine. After another futile attempt to raise discussion on the court-martial through a side issue, Cochrane gave up the subject in the House of Commons. In truth the House, with all its failings, does not encourage what it believes to be vindictive personal attacks. If Cochrane had held his tongue, there were plenty of severe critics, both in the House and in the Press, to blight Gambier's

laurels before they were fairly set on his brow, and to protest against the prostitution of the thanks of Parliament. But indeed the conversion of military success to political ends is an evil inseparable from government by party.

Cochrane now turned to political agitation without the walls of the House in addition to naval criticisms within. In the first six months of 1810 he did good service by exposing the abuses of the Admiralty Courts, and the scandals of the pension-list; nor were his revelations wholly discouraged by the representatives of the Admiralty on the Treasury benches. One sentence from his speech on the pension-list is worth quoting: "I find that the Wellesleys receive from the public £34,729, a sum equal to 426 pair of lieutenants' legs, calculated at the rate of allowance for Lieutenant Chambers's legs [he had lost both in action, and received a pension of £80]. Calculated by the pension for Captain Johnston's arm, viz. £45, Lord Arden's sinecure is equal to the value of 1022 captains' arms. The Marquis of Buckingham's sinecures alone will maintain the whole ordinary establishment of the victualling departments at Chatham, Dover, Gibraltar, Sheerness, Downs, Heligoland, Cork, Malta, Mediterranean, Cape of Good Hope, and Rio de Janeiro, and leave £5460 in the Treasury." Perhaps the happiest hit in this, the best of Cochrane's speeches, was a reference to his "respected grandmother," Mrs. Gilchrist, whose name, although she had been dead eight years, was still retained in the list as in receipt of £100 a year. The reduction of sinecures in the years that immediately followed was certainly hastened by the boldness and freedom of this attack.

Nevertheless the man's heart soon wearied of politics,

and pined for service at sea. In June he forwarded to the Admiralty a detailed scheme for desultory attacks on the French coast, hoping for such a command as that originally offered to him by Lord Mulgrave. He was answered by a cold request to name a day on the following week when he should be ready to sail for the Mediterranean in the *Imperieuse*. Dissatisfied with this Cochrane proceeded to argue the point at length with the First Lord, who, after returning one decidedly curt reply, declined further controversy, and cut the discussion short by sending the *Imperieuse* to sea under another captain. Cochrane's indignation was great; but a man who refuses a squadron when it is offered to him, in order that he may stay at home and attack the Government, can hardly expect a renewal of the offer after his attack has failed.

Early in 1811 Cochrane paid a visit to Malta, there to unearth the iniquities of the Admiralty Court. He, in common with all naval officers, had suffered much from the exorbitant fees illegally charged for the condemnation of prizes, and was determined to expose the whole system. Having first ascertained that a single individual had illegally combined in his sole person the functions of marshal and proctor of the court, and charged fees in both capacities, he demanded the revision of his prize-accounts according to the authorised table of fees. This, and a modest request to be allowed a bare sight of the table, being refused, he one day invaded the court when the judge was not sitting, and having searched in vain for the table in the public chamber, where the law directed that it should be hung, he penetrated into the judge's private apart-

ments, and finally discovered it in the most secret recess of his resting-room. Cochrane at once carried off the spoil, and passed it to a brother officer for safe custody. The judge, thereupon, ordered his arrest for contempt of court, an order which the illegally-appointed marshal was for obvious reasons unwilling to execute. At length, however, Cochrane was arrested, and refusing to walk, was carried to gaol. Arrived there, he was asked what he would order for dinner. Nothing, he replied; his arrest was illegal, and he would pay for nothing; if he died of starvation in gaol the Admiralty Court would answer for it. This was unpleasant. The marshal hastily provided him with an order on a neighbouring innkeeper for any provisions that he might choose to ask for; and Cochrane, armed with this document, entertained large parties of naval officers at dinner every night on the best and most expensive fare that Malta could furnish,—all, of course, at the marshal's expense. For a month things went on merrily, and then the officials of the court determined in despair to bring him to trial. But the difficulty was to discover a charge on which to try him, for, though there was moral certainty, there was no evidence to show that he had abstracted the table of fees from the court. After a deal of futile argument, the judge begged him to go out on bail; Cochrane flatly refused, and there was therefore nothing for it but to remand this expensive prisoner to gaol once more. At length the feeling of all ranks of the navy in his favour became so strong, that the seamen threatened to pull down the prison if Cochrane were not released; and, as a riot or a scandal would have done more harm than good to

the service, it was arranged that he should escape. The necessary tools for cutting through the iron bars were sent to him; the gaoler was made drunk; a final banquet was held at the expense of the marshal; and Cochrane, climbing down by a rope from his window, was taken by a man-of-war's boat on board the English packet. Though numbers of the seamen knew of the manner of his escape, no reward from the Admiralty Court could tempt a single man to speak.

On his arrival in England Cochrane told the whole story to the House of Commons, unrolling, amid shouts of laughter, a bill of costs from the proctor of the Admiralty Court which measured six fathoms and a quarter in length. But though a motion for the production of papers respecting the court was received with sympathy and carried, it was too much to expect that an account of his pranks would commend itself to the House. However monstrous the peculations of the Admiralty Court, such proceedings hardly became the dignity of a distinguished naval officer. His next feat was to second an address in reply to the King's speech, which was moved by Burdett before the mover, formally put forward by the Government, could get on his legs. Needless to say, he and Burdett and one other were the only members who could be found to vote for it. He was already beginning to be somewhat troublesome in the House, for though he could, when he chose, talk the soundest good sense on naval subjects, yet he had the habit of dragging in reference to abuses and grievances, in season and out of season, after a fashion that would have tried the patience of the purest assembly.

Meanwhile he never ceased to prophesy failure to the British army in the Peninsula, and to advocate his own system of desultory naval attack as the cheapest and most effective way of driving the French from Spain. He had just about this time matured his "secret plans," whereby war was to be begun and ended by a single stroke. Wherein this plan consisted it is impossible to say, for its secret is still buried in the archives of the War Office; but it is generally supposed to have had its root in some new and appalling explosive, practically the same, it is said, as that whereof the discovery recently created such excitement in France. As to its efficacy there is said to be no room for doubt. The scheme was explained at the time to the Prince Regent and the Duke of York, and even to some extent accepted by the Admiralty. Lord Melville requested Cochrane to draw up a plan of attack on the outer roads of Toulon, and intimated that he was prepared to allow a portion of the secret plan to be put into operation. Cochrane, however, objected, on the ground that the partial development of the design would enable the French to penetrate into his secret, and to turn it, on a more destructive scale, against England herself. Lord Keith pressed him hard to accept the terms of the Admiralty; but he persisted in his refusal, and his secret plan remains a secret to this day.

In the midst of this extraordinary activity in the domains of politics, science, and strategy, Cochrane found time to court Miss Katherine Corbett Barnes, the orphan daughter of an honourable Midland family, who was residing with her guardian in Portland Place. He was himself staying at the time with his Uncle Basil,

who had made a large fortune in the East India Company's service. The old gentleman, learning with strong disapproval of Cochrane's attachment to Miss Barnes, suggested to him, with marvellous want of tact, an alliance with the daughter of an official of the Admiralty Court, at the same time hinting that his nephew would gain not only the lady's dower but also his own fortune, in due time, by the match. Cochrane, of course, declined the offer, pleading, among other reasons (as though his own honour were not sufficient), that marriage for money would render him contemptible in the eyes of his constituents. He then sought Miss Barnes, told her the whole story, and with some difficulty prevailed upon her to consent to a secret marriage. The pair, therefore, made a runaway match of it at Annan on August 8th, 1812, and Uncle Basil cut his nephew's name out of his will for ever.

As compensation for his loyalty to his constituents, Cochrane was re-elected member for Westminster at the General Election in the autumn of 1812. He pledged himself, as became a Radical, to vote on all occasions for reform; but it was only with an effort, and indeed in deference to his supporters, that he managed to swallow Catholic Emancipation. Even so he did not conceal his dislike of auricular confession and the principles of Rome "so favourable to despotism." However he was re-elected, as has been said, and enabled to resume his attacks on naval abuses in the House. Unfortunately, in his championship of the sailors he was often more eager than judicious. With an excellent case and abundance of material for complaint at his hand, he was always tempted to abuse it by over-

statement,—a curious fault in one who in actual warfare husbanded his resources to the utmost. By yielding to this failing he one day exposed himself to a telling retort from the secretary to the Admiralty, the notorious Croker. It is characteristic of the man that after fifty years we find him still writhing under Croker's lash, and devoting pages of his autobiography to a lame refutation of Croker's speech. One would be glad, did not veracity compel some mention thereof, to cut the whole of Cochrane's parliamentary career out of his biography.

We now approach the darkest period of this stormy life. The year 1814 opened propitiously, bringing him, after years of inactivity, the appointment of flag-captain to his uncle, Sir Alexander, then commanding the British fleet on the North American Station. After a series of matchless victories over the French, our ships had suffered sad defeat at the hands of the Americans; and Cochrane felt himself to be the man to restore the injured prestige of his country on the sea. While, therefore, the Admiral made all haste across the Atlantic to take up his command, Cochrane busied himself throughout the month of February with fitting out his flagship, the *Tonnant*, at Chatham. On the 21st of February, 1814, London was startled by the arrival of an officer in foreign uniform, who brought news that Bonaparte had been killed by the Cossacks, and that the allies were in full march on Paris. The whole affair was soon discovered to be an elaborate hoax, designed for the purpose of raising prices on the Stock Exchange. The pretended officer, who called himself Colonel de Bourg, was in reality an adventurer named Berenger, who had been employed on his

fraudulent mission by Cochrane's uncle, Mr. Alexander Cochrane-Johnstone. Now it most unfortunately happened that Cochrane knew something of Berenger. The latter was a man of some scientific attainment, and decided military capacity; so much so, that the Admiral had applied for his services as a trainer of sharp-shooters on board the *Tonnant*. It seems that Berenger, after playing his part as a bearer of false despatches,—a long part, which had required him first to communicate his fictitious news to the Admiral at Dover, and then to drive in a kind of triumphal progress from Dover to London —lost courage completely, and betook himself directly on his arrival to Cochrane's lodgings. Cochrane was in the city at the time, but receiving a message that a strange gentleman was waiting to see him, hurried home, thinking that he might have brought news of his brother, then lying desperately ill at the seat of war in Spain. On his return the unhappy Berenger, at his wits' end to find a safe asylum somewhere, pressed him hard for a berth on the *Tonnant*. This Cochrane refused, as in duty bound, without authority from the Admiralty. Berenger then begged at least for the loan of a decent coat and hat wherein to wait upon his patrons at that office; these Cochrane (whose clothes were at the moment a-sorting in preparation for his voyage) good-naturedly gave him, no doubt rejoicing to get rid of a troublesome suitor on such easy terms.

In a very short time the facts of the hoax came out, and among them the awkward circumstance that the chief actor therein had gone straight to Lord Cochrane's house when the performance was over, and there obtained a change of clothes,—a great object to a man who

wished to rid himself of the disguise of a foreign officer without suspicion. Finding his name mentioned as that of an accessory to the fraud, Cochrane, against the advice of his solicitors, published a detailed affidavit of his own doings on the day of the hoax, which enabled the authorities to identify the pretended Colonel de Bourg with Berenger. Then it came out that Mr. Cochrane-Johnstone had made large profits on the Stock Exchange out of the hoax; that a Mr. Butt, with whom Cochrane had had some dealing, was likewise mixed up therein; and lastly, that Cochrane himself, through this same Mr. Butt, had, since November, 1813, been dabbling, not without profit, in "time-bargains" on the Stock Exchange. The result was that all three, together with some others, were placed in the dock and tried before Lord Ellenborough on the charge of conspiracy to defraud.

The story of the trial is not a pleasant one. Lord Ellenborough, though Chief-Justice, was also a member of the Cabinet, and a strong partisan; and having convinced himself of the guilt of all the prisoners, spared no pains to ensure their conviction. When the case for the prosecution closed late in the evening of the first day of the trial, he would not consent to the adjournment of the court, but insisted that counsel should proceed with the defence, though they, as well as every one else in court, were exhausted by a sitting that had already lasted twelve hours. In summing up, again, Lord Ellenborough was not less severe against the prisoners, and the result was that one and all were found guilty. Nor was the verdict, except in Cochrane's case, other than just. At the beginning of the following term Cochrane applied in person for a new trial, and

stated his case forcibly and temperately before four judges; but under a certain rule of court, which could not be called just, the application was refused. On the 21st of June he, together with Butt and Cochrane-Johnstone, was sentenced to stand in the pillory for an hour, to be imprisoned for a year, and to pay a fine of a thousand pounds.

As to the merits of the case it is unnecessary to speak in detail. Cochrane's innocence has so long been accepted by public opinion and endorsed by public authority, that it is needless to assert it. It must, however, be admitted that his cause was greatly prejudiced by his own negligence; he acknowledges that he never read his brief, and it is certain that after the trial he quarrelled violently with his solicitors. It must also be admitted that, despite his innocence, the case against him had a very ugly appearance, far too serious to be treated with indifference. The explanation of his carelessness is, however, one that commands our respect, namely, a chivalrous determination to stand by his uncle at all hazards. Unfortunately the dead weight of Cochrane-Johnstone's guilt was too heavy for him, and dragged him down irrecoverably to disgrace. He was throughout, so far as he was mixed up in the affair at all, the tool of a selfish and unscrupulous man, who, needless to say, fled from justice when detected, and left his nephew to bear the penalty alone. Cochrane always asserted that his conviction was the work of a political conspiracy; but this is an extreme statement. It was the result mainly of sheer bad luck, — of the unfortunate inspiration which led Berenger to take refuge at his lodgings.

A notice of motion tending towards his expulsion from the House of Commons soon followed the sentence. Cochrane wrote to the Speaker entreating that he might be heard in his defence. He was permitted to speak for himself on the 5th of July, and a lamentable scene followed. Labouring evidently under a tempest of excitement, he threw good sense and good taste to the winds. So vituperative was he towards judge, jury, and political opponents that Hansard's report omits many passages and might well, for his sake, have omitted more. In fact, his actions in the period immediately following the trial are those of a man who, to use an expressive phrase, has lost his head; and as such, considering the crushing weight of his misfortune, they must not be too harshly judged. The House at first was not unsympathetic towards him; but when his speech was ended, Mr. Ponsonby, who to the end stood bravely by him, confessed with sorrow that if Cochrane's worst and bitterest enemy had been employed to injure his cause he could not have done so more effectually that Cochrane himself. Castlereagh, on the other side, was not unduly severe when he said that Cochrane had not advocated, but prejudged his case. Finally, the motion for his expulsion was carried by one hundred and forty votes to forty-four. On the 19th of July Lord Ebrington, a young and unknown member of the minority, moved for an address to the Prince Regent, praying him to remit the sentence of the pillory. Cochrane, hearing of his intention, wrote him a sufficiently ungracious letter, saying that he did not expect to be held up as an object of mercy; that if he was guilty he deserved the whole sentence, and so

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forth. But Lord Ebrington was not to be deterred. He quietly read the letter to the House and proceeded with his motion, which after some debate was withdrawn, on Castlereagh's undertaking that the Government would itself recommend the remission of the pillory. Cochrane, in his diseased state of mind, could see no party but himself concerned in the matter; but Lord Ebrington saw even greater disgrace to the country than to Cochrane in the exaction of such a penalty. "You were right," said Napoleon to him, six months later, at Elba. "Such a man should not be made to suffer so degrading a punishment."

Meanwhile other and far more potent champions had espoused his cause. Expelled from the House of Commons on the 5th of July, Cochrane was re-elected by his constituents of Westminster on the 19th, a vindication which he proudly accepted as conclusive. But the sharpest blow of all still awaited him. On the 25th his name was struck off the navy-list, and on the 10th of August his banner as a knight of the Bath was taken down from Henry the Seventh's chapel and kicked, with every degradation, down the steps,—never to be replaced until the day of his funeral.

In the King's Bench prison he was not at first ill served. He lived in two rooms at his own expense, and busied himself with planning and perfecting his inventions,—lamps of his design being actually introduced into the parish of St. Ann's, Westminster, in the third month of his confinement. Evil counsellors were, however, about him, who unfortunately prevailed with him to give way to his mad love of pranks. On the 6th of March, 1815, he escaped from the King's Bench, as he had

escaped from the prison at Malta, and took refuge at Holly Hill, his house in Hampshire, whence he announced the fact to the Speaker of the House of Commons. On the 20th of March he appeared in person at the House, where, of course, he was arrested by an officer of the prison. He disputed the validity of the officer's warrant, resisted violently, and after an unseemly scuffle was carried out of the House. He held the doubtful opinion that his arrest within the House was a breach of privilege; Castlereagh and the House thought otherwise. We who live under a reformed Parliament, and surrounded on all sides by reformed Parliaments, may pity Cochrane, but must on principle agree with Castlereagh. On his return to gaol he was treated with the severity usually reserved for prisoners who attempt to escape, and confined for three weeks in a strong room without window, fireplace, table, or bed. It is pitiful to have to record such things; but what was the unfortunate gaoler to do? Another lodging was offered to him, if he, or his friends for him, would undertake that there should be no further effort to escape; but he would not hear of such conditions. At last the prison authorities gave way and restored him to better quarters, where he quietly awaited the expiration of his sentence. Even so, he was detained for an additional fortnight because he refused to pay his fine; but at last he yielded to the entreaties of his friends, and having on the 3rd of July tendered a thousand-pound note, endorsed with a defiant inscription, he was once more a free man.

From the prison he went on the same evening to the House of Commons, where he had the satisfaction of arriving in time to turn a division against the Govern-

ment by a majority of one. Two days later he gave notice that next session he would move for inquiry into the conduct of Lord Ellenborough, and spent the next months in the preparation of a stupendous indictment against him. On the 5th of March, 1816, this document, containing thirteen distinct charges, was read in the House of Commons to an audience of three members. Three weeks later a fourteenth charge, incriminating another of the judges, was added to the above, but ruled out of order; and a month after Cochrane moved for consideration of the whole. He and Burdett alone voted for the motion, eighty-nine members voting against it. Even those who were convinced of Cochrane's innocence openly declined to abet him in this attack on the Chief-Justice, which Brougham, than whom Cochrane had no warmer friend, has called a parody of an impeachment. There were, however, in the distress that followed the exhaustion at the close of the war, ample opportunities for Cochrane to do his worst against the Government; and he accordingly hurled himself into the storm of agitation with all the vehemence of an embittered and disordered spirit. We shall not follow him through this portion of his career, which he afterwards admitted to have been sadly disfigured by faction. In the House of Commons we find him eternally on his legs, presenting petitions, denouncing the House as the source of all perjury and fraud, and instituting comparisons between Ministers and the Dey of Algiers, decidedly to the advantage of the Dey.

The spring of 1817 was enlivened by a characteristic freak. The bill of twelve hundred pounds for the entertainment of the electors of Honiton in 1806 was still

unpaid; and the creditors, wearied beyond endurance, at last obtained an order to put an execution into his house at Holly Hill. Cochrane, aware of his awful reputation as a maker of infernal engines, surrounded his windows and doors with bags of charcoal, and therewith defied the sheriff of Hampshire and all his officers. For six weeks the siege continued, no one daring to face these mysterious bags, until at last one man, less careful of life than the rest, jumped in at an open window and discovered Cochrane sitting comfortably at breakfast.

But more serious matters also were engaging his attention at this time. In April there arrived in London an emissary from Chili, Don José Alvarez by name, to borrow money and enlist sympathy for the cause of South American independence, and, above all, to press Cochrane to take command of the patriot navy. It is curious that Spain, the tyrant mother-country, also made an effort to secure his services against the said patriots; but it was one of Cochrane's principles always "to make common cause with the helpless and oppressed," and there was no hesitation in his choice. Gladly enough he accepted the proposition of Alvarez, which offered him at once a fortune, an opportunity to promote the cause of "liberty," and, above all, a field for his genius in the art of war. He at once took the necessary steps to realise his property, and prepared for life in a different world.

During the first months of 1818 he was still occasionally heard in the House of Commons; and on the 2nd of June, on the occasion of Sir F. Burdett's second motion for Parliamentary Reform, he delivered his last and farewell speech. And then, for the first time, the pug-

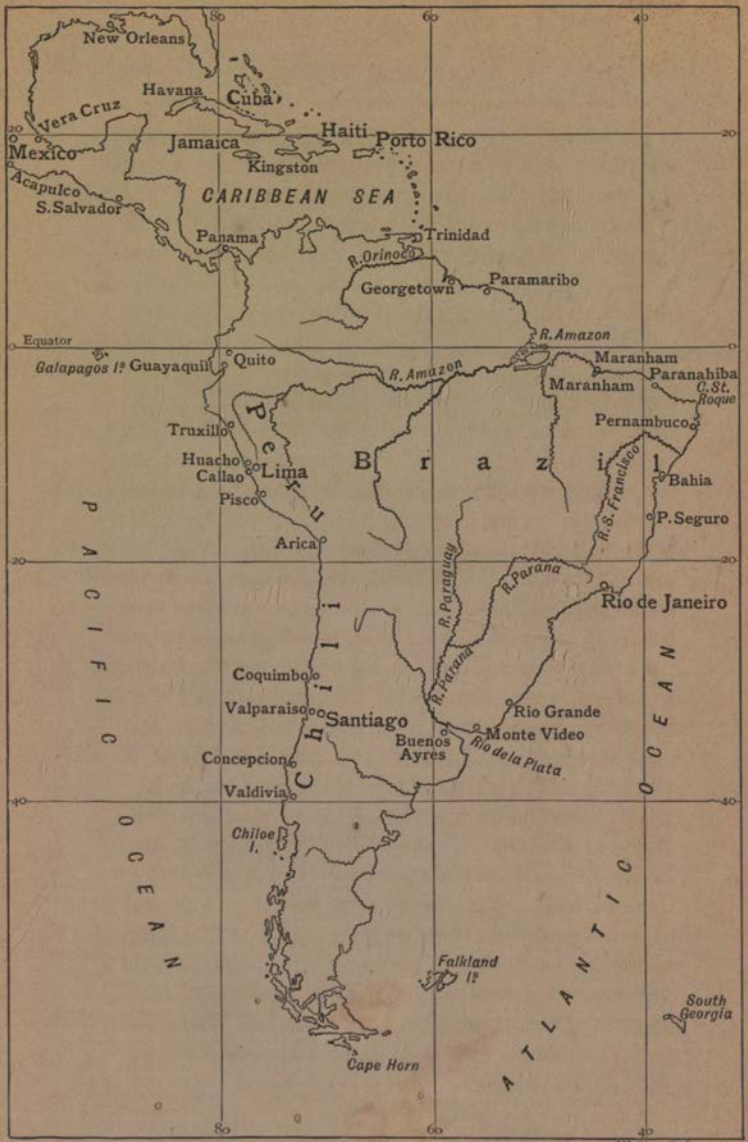
nacious and indomitable spirit broke down. Wildly and furiously as he had fought against the political conspiracy (for such he too readily believed it to be) which had driven him from the navy, and even from the country, he was now compelled to acknowledge that it had been too strong for him; and this was a man unaccustomed to defeat. Above all, there was the disgrace of the trial lying thick upon him, for all his efforts still unpurged, and the fretting sense of a great injustice, for all his struggles still unredressed. Defeat is none the less galling, though we ascribe it to the wrong enemy. In sentences broken by painful agitation he took his leave of the House of Commons, probably never so sympathetic towards him as at that moment; for men do not lightly esteem gallant service in war, and Cochrane's skilful and superb audacity was a thing of which Englishmen could not but be proud. So they heard him not unkindly, this fire-eater who had called them the source of all perjury and fraud, and it may be cursed, as we too may curse, the day that sent so great a sailor from the quarterdeck to the floor of the House of Commons.

CHAPTER VII

SERVICE IN CHILI AND PERU—VALDIVIA—THE "ESMERALDA"

1817–1820

THE rise of South American independence dates strictly from the year 1794, when the Spanish colonies,—that is to say, roughly speaking, the whole of the South American continent, excepting Brazil and the three Guianas—stirred by the example of the Americans and the French, roused themselves in their turn to shake off the yoke of Spain. Their first leader, Miranda, who is known to Englishmen as the true begetter of our unfortunate expedition to La Plata in 1806-7, began operations in his native Venezuela. He tried first in 1806 and failed, again in 1810 and failed, and finally, in 1812, was captured by the Spaniards and imprisoned for life. In 1816, however, Bolivar followed in his footsteps with far greater success; he founded the Republic of Colombia, liberated the whole of the north down to the province of La Plata, and established on its borders the Republic which, called after his name, is now known as Bolivia. Chili, of course, was bitten, like the other provinces, with the desire for "liberty." She began the struggle in 1810, and succeeded in the following year in the achievement



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of her independence. Thereupon the patriots incontinently took to fighting among themselves, and tempted the Spaniards in 1813 to essay a reconquest. For a moment they were foiled by the resistance of General Bernardo O'Higgins, a patriot of Irish lineage; but in 1814 they were enabled, owing to the continued strife among the insurgents, to subdue the province once more. For two years and a half Chili lay quiet; and then the intrepid O'Higgins reappeared from across the Andes in company with General San Martin, a patriot who had done good work for the cause in La Plata. With an army of five thousand men he surprised the central garrison of the Spaniards, and entered the capital, Santiago, in triumph on the 14th of February, 1817. O'Higgins was then named Supreme Director of the restored Republic of Chili; and, that the Commonwealth might be no more overthrown, Cochrane was summoned from Europe to wrest from Spain her supremacy on the sea. This design comprehended the liberation of Peru as well as the maintenance of Chili, inasmuch as Callao, the port of Lima, was the base of Spanish naval operations.

Cochrane quitted England on the 15th of August, 1818, and reached Valparaiso, the port of Santiago, on the 28th of November. The city was at the moment in a state of uncommon elation. The Chilian fleet, under Admiral Blanco Encelada, had started for a cruise on the 18th of October, had captured a fine Spanish frigate of fifty guns, and had actually returned on the 7th of November safe and sound with its prize to Valparaiso. As the crews consisted for the most part of peasants who had never even seen the sea, the success, though due rather to good luck than good management, was really remark-

able. This victory heightened the effervescence of patriotic emotion which greeted Cochrane's arrival. He was fêted for an incredible number of days; a compliment which, forgetting that it is our unique national distinction to have accomplished two revolutions without a single fête, he returned by giving a great dinner on St. Andrew's Day, and presiding thereat in the national costume of a Scottish chief. Finally, after a surfeit of feasts, he at length prevailed upon the Government to attend to business. His commission constituted him Admiral and Commander-in-Chief of the naval forces of Chili, and his fleet consisted of seven vessels; the captured Spanish frigate, now christened the *O'Higgins*, the *San Martin* of fifty-six, and the *Lautaro* of forty-four guns (both old East Indiamen), the *Galvarino* of eighteen, the *Chacabuco* of twenty, the *Araucano* and the *Puyrredon* each of sixteen guns. At the outset he had trouble with some of his subordinates. The *Galvarino* was a sloop-of-war which had been sold out of the British service and bought as a speculation by two officers, known in the Chilian service as Captains Guise and Spry. These enterprising men took her first to Buenos Ayres, where they endeavoured unsuccessfully to sell her to the Government, and next to Chili, where they persuaded the authorities to receive not only the vessel but themselves into the naval service. Being both of them men of experience, they had won some ascendency over Encelada in their recent cruise; and having no wish to lose it, intrigued together with another captain, an American named Worcester, to bring about a division of the supreme command between Encelada and Cochrane. The plot was defeated by the unselfish patriotism of the

Chilian, who insisted on holding an inferior position; but the relations between Cochrane and these two captains were strained to the very end.

On the 16th of January, 1819, Cochrane finally sailed with the *O'Higgins* (flag), *San Martin* (Captain Wilkinson), *Lautaro* (Captain Guise) and *Chacabuco* (Captain Carter). A little incident, which went near to have a tragical ending, took place at his departure. Lady Cochrane had said her last farewells and returned to the shore from the flagship, and the fleet was just getting under way, when little Tom Cochrane, the Admiral's eldest boy, slipped out of the house from his mother, and running to the flag-lieutenant, begged to be taken to his father. The officer, nothing loth, hoisted him on his shoulder; and so the little fellow, at that time but five years old, was carried along the street, waving his cap and shouting "Viva la patria!" with all his might. An excited mob of patriots soon gathered round the pair, hurried them down with frantic cheering to the beach, and sent them off to the flagship before Lady Cochrane had time to interfere. The *O'Higgins* being actually under way, the child was perforce received on board, where, needless to say, the ship's company made a great pet of him, and provided him with a miniature midshipman's uniform.

The cruise opened badly with a mutiny on board the *Chacabuco*, the second within a few months, which forced the squadron to put into Coquimbo for the punishment of the offenders. This business over, Cochrane sailed northward to Callao, where the bulk of the Spanish naval force was concentrated under the shelter of the forts. The Spanish fleet consisted of the *Esmeralda* and

two more frigates, a corvette, three brigs, one schooner, and six heavily-armed merchantmen; fourteen ships in all, of which ten were ready for sea, as well as twenty-seven gunboats. The whole mounted altogether three hundred and fifty guns, and were moored under batteries mounting one hundred and sixty guns more. Cochrane's original design had been to take in the *O'Higgins* and *Lautaro* under American colours, make a feint of sending a boat ashore with despatches, and then dash at the frigates and cut them out. The whole plan was, however, upset by a thick fog; and though the flagship engaged the batteries for two hours no effective harm was done. In fact, the only interest attached to this action belongs to the tiny midshipman accidentally shipped at Valparaiso. Before the firing began the child had been carefully locked up by Cochrane in his cabin; but, true to his hereditary instincts, he presently made his escape, and reappearing on deck rejoined his father. Cochrane having no time to look after him, the child was suffered to remain, and to amuse himself by handing powder to the gunners. Cochrane meanwhile watched the action from the hammocks, Major Miller, his commandant of marines, standing on a carronade close to him, and marvelling at the Admiral's extraordinary power of calculating the direction of a cannon-shot when flying in mid-air. "There comes a shot straight for us," observed Cochrane to him, "but don't move, for it will strike below us." The words were hardly out of his mouth when the ball entered the port immediately beneath them, and carried off the head of an unlucky marine, scattering his blood and brains full in the face of little Tom Cochrane. For a moment the father was paralysed with agony, in the assurance that his

boy was killed, when the imp ran up to him saying, "I am not hurt, papa; the shot did not touch me. Jack says the ball is not made that will hurt mamma's boy." In vain Cochrane ordered him to be taken below; the child, firmly convinced as to the infallibility of what "Jack says," resisted with all his might, and was finally permitted to finish the action on deck. The Spaniards, who now for the first time discovered that Cochrane was fighting against them, christened him "El Diablo"; what would they have said if they had witnessed little Tom's baptism of fire?

Foiled in this first attempt Cochrane withdrew to the island of San Lorenzo, about three miles from the forts, in Callao Bay, and there, while effectively blockading the port, established a laboratory for the preparation of an explosion-vessel. The Spaniards, meanwhile, remembering Aix Roads, dismantled their ships and built of the spars a double boom to protect the anchorage. On the 22nd of March the vessel was completed, and turned adrift in the direction of the Spanish frigates, the *O'Higgins* standing in meanwhile to draw the fire of ships and batteries upon herself. Unluckily the infernal machine was sunk by a shot when close to the frigates, so that this attempt also failed. After three months more spent on the coast without further incident than isolated captures of treasure and military stores, Cochrane returned on the 16th of June to Valparaiso. The principal result of his cruise had been to lock the Spanish fleet closely into port, but this was by no means commensurate with his hopes. He now urged upon the Government the expediency of manufacturing rockets, as the most effective weapon that could be employed against

the hostile vessels in Callao; and having obtained a supply thereof, sailed thither once more on the 12th of September, this time with the whole of his seven ships. The expedition opened unfavourably. On calling at Coquimbo for one thousand troops that had been promised to him, he found only ninety men ready; and these came on board in rags, bringing an epidemic with them. With these, nevertheless, he sailed, and anchoring in Callao Roads on the 29th of September, sent, with very questionable taste, a challenge to the Spanish commander to bring out his ships and fight him in the open sea. Receiving a very curt reply to his invitation, he busied himself with the construction of rocket-rafts; and having provided their crews with air-tight metal cuirasses to keep them afloat in case of accident, he delivered, on the 2nd of October, his grand attack. The result was a complete failure. The Chilian Government, in its parsimony, had entrusted the loading of the rocket-tubes to Spanish prisoners, who, not unnaturally, had mingled with the powder sand, sawdust, manure, and other incombustible substances in such quantities as to make the rockets absolutely harmless.

Deeply mortified by this third failure, Cochrane reverted to his favourite idea of attack by explosion-vessels; and to test its probable effect, on the night of the 4th he set a lighted tar-barrel afloat, to drift in with the tide towards the Spanish fleet. The experiment was satisfactory, for the Spaniards kept up a tremendous fire for more than an hour upon the hapless barrel; and, accordingly, on the following day, an explosion-vessel was launched against the boom. But once more fortune sided against Cochrane. The wind

dropped just at the critical moment; and the vessel, riddled through and through with shot, was perforce abandoned, and blew up at a harmless distance from the enemy. More than ever disappointed, and embarrassed, moreover, by want of supplies, Cochrane now left Callao, and despatched an expedition to Pisco to take the necessary stores from the enemy; but this enterprise again was disastrous, for though the ships obtained all that they needed, the attacking force suffered heavy loss. Colonel Charles, an old Peninsula officer in the Chilian service, was killed, and Major Miller, likewise a veteran of the famous army, was desperately wounded; and these were men not easily to be replaced. Cochrane with a heavy heart cruised northward to Guayaquil, where he captured two Spanish war-vessels; and then he made up his mind to a desperate venture. So far he had been baffled in all his attacks; the Chilians had expected a great deal of him, and were not likely to be satisfied; Captains Guise and Spry were busily fomenting discontent in the squadron, in the hope of ousting him on his return to Valparaiso; finally, his own disappointment and humiliation were extreme. He now dispersed the squadron to various stations, and himself sailed away alone with the flagship without hint of his destination.

His design was to capture by a *coup de main* a stronghold hitherto deemed to be impregnable, and the centre of Spanish power in Chili, the port of Valdivia. Arriving off that harbour on the 18th of January, 1820, he hoisted Spanish colours and signalled for a pilot. Forthwith came off not only a pilot, but a complimentary party of an officer and four men, who were at once made

prisoners. From them valuable information on various points was obtained, more particularly as to the expected arrival of a Spanish brig of war. Two whole days were then occupied in sounding the channels and reconnoitring the forts, until the process was suddenly interrupted by a heavy fire from the batteries. On the third day the brig appeared, and, deceived by the Spanish colours, was captured without firing a shot. Cochrane then sailed away from Valdivia to Concepcion, in the hope of obtaining from the garrison there stationed a sufficient force for his contemplated attack. The commandant, M. Freire, a Frenchman, gladly seconded his project, and gave him two hundred and fifty men, together with a gallant countryman of his own, Major Beauchef, to command them. Luckily, also, there chanced to be lying in the harbour the Chilian sloop *Montezuma* and the brig *Intrepido* of Buenos Ayres, the latter of which voluntarily placed itself at Cochrane's disposal. Here, then, were both troops and transports, and so far all was well; but now a new difficulty arose. The flagship had but two naval officers on board, one of whom, a lieutenant, was under arrest, and the other hopelessly incompetent. Cochrane was therefore obliged to act at once as admiral, captain, and permanent officer of the watch.

On the 25th of January the *O'Higgins* left Concepcion, and on the night of the 26th lay becalmed off the island of Quiriquina. Cochrane, worn out with watching, made over the ship to the charge of the lieutenant and lay down to rest, leaving orders that he should be called immediately if the wind should rise. The lieutenant, taking advantage of Cochrane's absence, retired to rest likewise, and delivered over his watch

to a midshipman; and the midshipman, without retiring, went comfortably to sleep on deck. A sudden breeze sprang up and drove the ship on to the sharp edge of a rock, where she lay suspended, as it were, upon her keel, beating heavily and doomed inevitably to go to pieces, if the sea should increase. With great difficulty Cochrane prevented officers and crew from abandoning the ship, and then set himself to save her if he could. The first sounding showed five feet of water in the hold; the pumps were entirely out of order, and the ship's carpenter, who was a carpenter in name only, was incompetent to repair them. Setting the whole crew to bale out the water with buckets, Cochrane pulled off his coat, tackled the repairs of the pumps himself, and by midnight had restored them to working order. Jack Larmour might well be proud of his former pupil. So far the water had gained on the ship, but the pumps once fairly at work the leak was mastered, and Cochrane straightway took measures to heave her off. In vain the officers clamoured that the full extent of the damage should first be ascertained. Cochrane would not hear of it; if the leak were under control the *O'Higgins* would swim as far as Valdivia, and he asked for nothing more. At length, after much hard work, the ship was floated and could proceed on her way; but the powder-magazine had been under water, and the whole of the ammunition, except a small supply on deck and that actually in the pouches of the troops, was ruined. Such a misfortune would have daunted most men, but to Cochrane it was of little import; the troops would be forced to use the bayonet, and the bayonet was a weapon that the

Spaniards would not face. "Major," he said to Miller, "Valdivia we must take; sooner than put back, it would be better that we all went to the bottom." Such was his resolution, whereunto the gallant Miller, still but half recovered from three bullet-wounds received at Pisco, most cheerfully assented. So forth he sailed, with a sinking ship and a flooded magazine, to take the best defended port in Spanish America.

On approaching Valdivia the whole of the troops and marines on the *O'Higgins* were transferred, in spite of a heavy sea, into the *Montezuma* and *Intrepido*, and Cochrane, shifting his flag to the latter vessel, ordered the *O'Higgins* to stand off out of sight lest she should arouse the suspicions of the Spaniards. The harbour of Valdivia is a deep inlet only three-quarters of a mile wide. The defences consisted of no less than fifteen forts on both sides, mounting in all one hundred and eighteen guns, and so effectively commanding the entrance, the anchorage, and the river leading to the town, that in skilful hands they rendered the port virtually impregnable. The surf was, moreover, so heavy that there was but one practicable landing-place, lying close under the outermost defence of the western shore, known as Fort Ingles. It was off this landing-place that the *Intrepido* and *Montezuma* anchored on the afternoon of the 3rd of February, 1820, the swell running at the time so high that disembarkation was impossible. Cochrane lowered all his boats and hid them under the lee of the ships, stowed his troops out of sight below, and, hoisting Spanish colours, gave the Spaniards to understand that he was just arrived from Cadiz, and that he wanted a pilot. "Send a boat ashore to fetch

one," was the answer. "Impossible," argued Cochrane; "our boats were all washed away in the passage round Cape Horn." But the Spaniards were not so easily satisfied; their only reply was to station a body of troops before the landing-place, and concentrate three hundred and fifty men from the inner defences at Fort Ingles. At this moment, by an unlucky mischance, one of the boats under the lee of the ships drifted astern in full view of the enemy, and the whole deception stood revealed. The guns of Fort Ingles at once opened fire, killing two men on board the *Intrepido;* and Cochrane perceived that, in spite of the surf, disembarkation must be accomplished at once. A launch containing forty-four men, led by Major Miller, pulled ashore under the fire of the troops on the beach, effected their landing, and drove off the Spanish soldiers at the bayonet's point, the gallant Miller, though still so weak that he could not move over the beach without assistance, directing the whole operation. A second launch then put off to join him, and by five o'clock in the evening three hundred men had made good their footing ashore.

Even now the capture of the forts seemed little nearer than before. The first of them, Fort Ingles, was accessible only by a single path, dangerously slippery by reason of the spray, and so narrow as to admit the passage of men in single file only; while the fort itself could only be entered by a ladder which the Spaniards, on their retreat, had drawn up after them. As usual Cochrane waited for the night; darkness was doubly in his favour, for the roar of the surf made it difficult to hear any other sound. As soon as the light was

gone, a small party of picked men marched silently to the left flank of the fort, while the main body of the Chilians advanced, shouting and discharging their muskets in the air. The Spaniards opened a heavy fire in the direction of the noise, but, owing to the darkness, without the slightest effect. Meanwhile the handful of men on the flank, led by a brave young Chilian officer named Vidal, had made their way into the fort by bridging the ditch with some palisades torn from the defences. Forming noiselessly under cover of some trees, they suddenly poured a volley into the unsuspecting garrison. The effect was instantaneous. The Spaniards fled from the fort headlong, dashed pell-mell into a body of three hundred men advancing to their support, and carried them away in panic towards the inner defences. The garrisons of the rearward forts opened their gates to receive the fugitives, but it was to their own ruin. The Chilians, following hard at their heels, entered the forts with the flying Spaniards, drove them out with the bayonet, and hunted them on from stronghold to stronghold. In this way three out of the five principal defences on the western shore were carried without difficulty. The approach to the fourth, Fort Chorocomayo, was guarded by two hundred men, with three guns posted to enfilade the only practicable path. It was a position where a few resolute men could have stopped a far larger force than Cochrane's; but these two hundred, like the rest, were seized with panic, and fled with the runaways into their fifth and last refuge, Fort Corral. The Chilians, in the flush of their success, were not to be denied; they stormed Fort Corral with undiminished impetuosity,

and at daybreak Cochrane found himself master of the whole of the defences of the western shore. The total Spanish loss amounted to over one hundred killed, and as many more made prisoners; while Cochrane's did not exceed seven killed and nineteen wounded. "Cool calculation," he said to Miller before the action, "would make it appear that the attempt to take Valdivia is madness. That is one reason why the Spaniards will hardly believe us in earnest. Operations unexpected by the enemy are, when well executed, almost certain to succeed, whatever be the odds." So confident was he of success that, after giving his final orders, he got into his gig, and, heedless of a furious fire from the batteries, pulled quietly up the harbour parallel to the advance of the troops on land.

Next day the *Intrepido* and *Montezuma* sailed into the harbour, followed at a brief interval by the *O'Higgins*. The Spaniards thereupon abandoned the forts on the eastern shore and on the islands in the harbour; and the whole of the defences were now in Cochrane's hands. It was none too soon, for mishaps now began to come fast. The *Intrepido* ran aground on her way into the harbour and became a total wreck; while the *O'Higgins*, which for days past had only with the greatest difficulty been kept afloat, finally succumbed, and was run ashore on a mud bank to save her from sinking in deep water. But it was not in Cochrane's nature not to press his success to the utmost; and on the 5th of February the *Montezuma* went up the river alone. On reaching the town he found it to be evacuated, so that nothing remained to be done except to garrison the forts with Beauchef's troops, and direct the people to choose them-

selves a governor under the Chilian Republic. Valdivia being the great military depôt of the Spaniards in the south, enormous quantities of stores and ammunition, as well as a vessel of war, the *Dolores*, fell into the victor's hands.

The *O'Higgins* being unserviceable, Cochrane sailed, on the 16th of February, with the *Montezuma* and *Dolores* for the island of Chiloe, hoping to capture that also by surprise. Unfortunately, however, the Spaniards received warning of his design, and repelled an attack made by Major Miller with heavy loss. Miller himself was again severely wounded, and was only saved by the devotion of his men. Cochrane thereupon turned back to Valparaiso, where he arrived on the 27th of February. The populace, of course, received him with enthusiasm, but the Ministers, and particularly Zenteno, the Minister of Marine, were loud in their censures of the rashness of the attack on Valdivia, even hinting that punishment rather than reward was the proper return for such service. Eventually, however, a medal was issued to the force, and thanks, with a grant of land, voted to Cochrane. It was, perhaps, hardly surprising that the Chilian authorities should have looked askance upon a commander who systematically disregarded his instructions and acted generally with complete independence; but the service was none the less great and far-reaching, for Valdivia, with the province at its back, had been the great stronghold of Spanish authority in Chili, and it was now lost for ever to Spain. The victory further enabled the Chilian Government to float a loan of a million sterling in London; and what is liberty without credit in the London money-market?

Nevertheless the rulers of Chili continued to show ill will both to Cochrane and to the fleet. They refused to grant a penny of reward, of prize-money, or even of pay to the seamen, and still debated the question whether Cochrane should not be tried by court-martial for employing his ships without orders in the reduction of Valdivia. The seamen, particularly the English and North Americans who were the backbone of the force, naturally became mutinous; and on the 14th of May Cochrane resigned his commission. This decisive step brought the authorities to their senses. The seamen, after some wrangling, were paid their wages, and Cochrane received assurance that his own share of prize-money, amounting to sixty-seven thousand dollars, should be delivered to him at the earliest possible moment. This settlement (which, by the way, was never fulfilled) had hardly been arranged, when the Chilian Ministers endeavoured to foist Captain Spry upon Cochrane as his flag-captain. Cochrane thereupon tendered his resignation for the second time, and the whole of his foreign officers, Guise and Spry excepted, resigned with him. This, of course, led to further altercation, and it was only with great difficulty, and after much haggling, that Cochrane and his officers were pacified, and such terms offered to the foreign seamen as would induce them to remain in the service.

On August 21st the squadron was despatched with General San Martin and four thousand troops, to assist in driving the Spaniards from Peru. Conflict of opinion, for which there was but too much room, soon arose between the two commanders. Hitherto

they had been good friends, and it was not the Admiral's fault that they did not remain so. Cochrane, always an advocate for decisive measures, was for landing the army close to Callao and marching straight upon Lima; but San Martin, who had his own ends in view, could not be brought to consent. Eventually it was disembarked at Pisco, where it remained inactive, and kept the squadron also inactive, for fifty days. Even when at last, after much argument and more waste of time, Callao was reached, San Martin would not land, but insisted on moving farther north to Ancon. Seeing that nothing could be done with such a man, Cochrane made a show of yielding to him, sent three of his ships to convoy the army to its destination, and himself remained with three more, the *O'Higgins*, *Lautaro*, and *Independencia*, as if to keep up the blockade of Callao.

But having rid himself of San Martin, Cochrane resolved on a very different line of action; nothing less, namely, than to cut out the *Esmeralda*, and another frigate which was said to have a million of dollars on board her, from under the batteries of Callao. Twice in the previous year his attempts on the Spanish fleet had failed; and any enterprise was now even more hazardous than before, for the Spaniards had strengthened the shore-batteries so that they mounted no fewer than three hundred guns, and had filled the *Esmeralda* with the best seamen and marines that they could procure. The ship was, moreover, defended by a strong boom with chain moorings and by armed blockships, and the whole was surrounded by a flotilla of twenty-seven gunboats. The *Esmeralda* might well be considered beyond the reach of any attack.

For three days Cochrane made his preparations without revealing his design, and then on the evening of the 5th of November issued an order to the squadron, announcing that the attack would take place that very night, and would be led by himself in person. "The value of all the vessels captured in Callao will be yours," he added; "and the same reward in money will be distributed among you as has been offered by the Spaniards in Lima to those who should capture any of the Chilian squadron." He then called for volunteers, and was answered by every seaman and marine on board the three ships. One hundred and sixty seamen and eighty marines were selected, and the *Independencia* and *Lautaro* were then sent out of the bay as if for the chase of some vessels in the offing. With but one of three Chilian ships in the harbour the Spaniards might feel assured of the impossibility of any attack on that night. After dark the attacking party was placed in fourteen boats alongside the flagship; every man being armed with cutlass and pistol, and dressed for distinction's sake in white with a blue band round the arm. At ten o'clock the boats put off in two divisions, the first under the command of Captain Crosbie, the second under Captain Guise, while Cochrane in the foremost boat took lead of all. The strictest silence was enforced, the use of firearms was forbidden, and so with muffled oars the boats sped noiselessly on their way through the blackness of the night. By midnight they were hard by the boom, where Cochrane's launch stumbled upon a Spanish guard-boat. A pistol at the Spanish officer's head, and an injunction of silence or death, checked all danger of an alarm, and the boats

made their way noiselessly through the narrow opening in the boom. In a few minutes the whole were alongside her in line, and the boarders were swarming up her sides at a dozen different points.

The Spaniards were taken completely by surprise; all except the sentries were asleep, and many were cut down before they knew what was going forward. Cochrane, who was the first man to board, was knocked down by the butt-end of a musket, and fell back into his boat upon a thole-pin, which entered his back close to the spine inflicting a severe wound. Immediately jumping up again he was shot through the thigh just as he stepped on the deck. He tied up the wound with a handkerchief and went on. Guise, who with all his faults did not want for bravery, appeared on deck at the same instant, having boarded from the opposite side, and the after part of the ship was almost immediately carried sword in hand by the Chilians. In the forecastle the Spaniards rallied and made a gallant stand; but in a short time they were fairly driven out, and forced to save themselves either by jumping overboard or scuttling down into the hold. For a moment the fight was renewed on the quarterdeck, where the Spanish marines stood and were cut down to a man; but their devoted gallantry was fruitless. In fifteen furious minutes, from first to last, the affair was over, and the *Esmeralda* was taken. Meanwhile the garrison ashore quickly took alarm at the uproar, and hastened to its guns; but Cochrane with his usual adroitness had forearmed himself against the batteries. There were two foreign ships of war in the harbour which had arranged with the Spanish authorities to hoist dis-

tinctive lights, in case of a night-attack, to protect them from the fire of the forts. No sooner did the batteries open fire than these same lights were hoisted on board the *Esmeralda*. For a time the puzzled gunners fired in a desultory manner upon all three of the ships, but finally devoted most of their attention to the two neutrals, forcing them to cut their cables and run out of range. Thereupon Captain Guise, who, owing to Cochrane's disability through wounds, had taken over the command, cut the *Esmeralda's* cable likewise, and making sail steered her in triumph out of the anchorage. Of the Spaniards one hundred and sixty were killed or wounded; of the Chilians eleven were killed and thirty wounded.

So ended the cutting out of the *Esmeralda*, generally esteemed to be the most brilliant and daring of all Cochrane's feats of arms. Had he not been wounded himself, the probability is that not the *Esmeralda* only but every Spanish ship in the harbour would have been taken or destroyed. He had carefully thought out and detailed the whole plan of operations. The captured vessel was to be used as a base of attack upon the rest; and his orders were imperative that her cables were not on any account to be cut. With the Admiral's ship in his hands, he had little fear of difficulty in subduing the remainder of the fleet. Guise, no doubt, used the best of his judgment when he cut the cables of the *Esmeralda*, but in doing so he disobeyed orders; and Cochrane, though for the moment reconciled to him by his gallant conduct in the action, never forgot it. Nevertheless, imperfect as the victory appeared to Cochrane's view, the capture of the *Esmeralda* remains one of the most

brilliant affairs in naval history. It is also one of the finest examples of the mingled calculation and daring which were Cochrane's peculiar gifts. At first sight the whole enterprise seems to be mere madness, yet under his direction it becomes simplicity itself. The enemy is first lulled into a false security by the ostentatious detachment of two-thirds of his force, and the intensity of the panic thereby increased tenfold. Every move is carefully studied with the object of increasing confusion among the Spaniards and preserving order among the Chilians. Every man knew what he had to do, and in justice to the Chilians they did it admirably and with perfect discipline. They had even been instructed, when the *Esmeralda* should have been captured, to cry, not *Viva la patria*, but *Viva el Rey*, in order to confound their unhappy foes to the last degree of mystification. No detail, as we know from experience of the blackened faces on the *Speedy*, was too small for Cochrane to turn to advantage; and no contingency so remote but that he would anticipate and meet it. And so the astounding fact remains that two hundred and forty men in fourteen boats cut out a powerful frigate, manned by half as many again as themselves, from within a circle of twenty-seven gun-boats and from under batteries of three hundred guns, and brought her off in triumph, with the Admiral and two hundred of the crew prisoners on board, at a cost of less than a dozen lives.

CHAPTER VIII

CLOSE OF SERVICE IN CHILI AND PERU

1820–1823

THE capture of the *Esmeralda* was a death-blow to the naval supremacy of the Spaniards in the Pacific; the victory only required to be followed up immediately by the army, and the liberation of Peru was accomplished. No one was warmer in his praise of the action than General San Martin, but no one was more supine in his efforts to take advantage of it. When Cochrane rejoined the army at Ancon on the 8th of November he found all ranks high in hope of an immediate advance on Lima; but San Martin, instead of advancing, decided to retreat to Huacho, whither Cochrane's squadron, abandoning the blockade of Callao, was forced to transport him. The troops being naturally discontented at this continued inaction, San Martin, in order at once to calm them and to gratify the public at Valparaiso, issued a proclamation wherein he ascribed the whole credit of the capture of the *Esmeralda* to the army. Such is ever the patriotism of communities which invoke a stranger to bear the brunt of their struggle for independence. Cochrane meanwhile returned to Callao, and put forth all his wiles to tempt the remain-

ing Spanish ships to action. Time after time the captured *Esmeralda* was ostentatiously placed in positions so hazardous as to promise success to any attempt for her recapture; but the Spaniards, far too much afraid of El Diablo to trust him even when he seemed to be most off his guard, prudently kept their ships under the batteries, which was perhaps the wisest thing that they could do in the circumstances. None the less, Cochrane's uniform success and the rigidity of the blockade produced their due effect: whole regiments of the Spaniards deserted, both officers and men; and province after province of Peru, throwing off its allegiance to Spain, embraced the patriot cause.

Yet amid all these successes San Martin with his army still remained inactive, while his general behaviour became more than ever suspicious. A mutiny, headed as usual by Guise and Spry, broke out in the fleet. Both of these officers were promptly tried and dismissed the service by Cochrane, but as promptly received and placed in high station by San Martin. In despair at the false dealing of the General, Cochrane urged him to give him one thousand men and permit him to capture Lima himself. San Martin would consent to no such thing. Cochrane then begged for six hundred men in order at any rate to complete the liberation of Peru; and these, together with his old comrade Miller to command them, he at length prevailed upon San Martin to give him. On the 13th of March, 1821, he sailed for Pisco, captured it without difficulty on the 20th, victualled his ships with captured stores, placed a patriot garrison in the town, and returned to Callao. Arrived there, he made a false attack on the ships under the batteries

in order to scare them from leaving their shelter, and then sailed for Arica, the southernmost point of Peru. The mere landing of the troops sufficed to capture the town; and Miller, advancing rapidly into the interior by a series of extraordinary marches and gallant actions, enforced the complete submission of the Spaniards throughout the province from the Andes to the ocean. Further operations were then stopped by new trickery on the part of San Martin, and Cochrane, anxious to see what was going forward, hastened back to Callao. He arrived there on the 5th of July, and on the next day the Spaniards evacuated Lima. Still San Martin remained inactive; he did not even occupy the town till three or four days after the evacuation, and made no attempt to molest the retreating Spaniards. He had, by general admission, an opportunity of finishing the war at a single stroke, and this opportunity he deliberately sacrificed. Meanwhile the batteries at Callao were still held by a Spanish garrison, and the Spanish ships still lay under their protection in the harbour. Cochrane took advantage of the discouragement caused by the evacuation of Lima to order a boat-attack, whereby three of these ships were captured and two more burned within musket-shot of the Spanish guns. Four days later (July 28th) the independence of Lima was declared; and on the very next day San Martin showed his hand by proclaiming himself Protector of Peru, and as such arrogating to himself autocratic power. The mystery of the army's inactivity was now unveiled; the troops had been saved in order to found an empire for that disinterested patriot, San Martin.

On the 4th of August Cochrane went ashore to claim

for the squadron twelve months' wages and a reward of fifty thousand dollars, which San Martin had engaged himself to pay at the opening of the last campaign. San Martin replied that he would not pay the Chilian squadron a farthing unless it were sold to Peru, and that even so the payment must be counted as part of the purchase money. In vain Cochrane tried to recall this precious patriot to some sense of honour and duty, and to remind him of his obligations not only to the squadron but to Chili at large. San Martin rubbed his hands, said that Chili would get nothing from him, and that the squadron might go where it pleased. The interview had come to an abrupt close, and Cochrane had left the new Protector to himself, when San Martin came to the door and asked him to take service with him as first Admiral of Peru. Cochrane, needless to say, met this insulting offer with a haughty refusal; whereupon San Martin angrily declared that he would pay the Chilian seamen neither the wages nor the arrears that he had promised them. There are times when the champion of an "oppressed nationality" must feel tempted to exchange the sword for the horsewhip.

On his return to his ship Cochrane received an order to acknowledge the new Protector of Peru. This of course he declined to do; but he seized the opportunity to write San Martin a long, verbose but not unfriendly lecture on the consequences of injustice, despotism, and so forth. San Martin replied in a tone equally friendly, breezily waving aside all Cochrane's reproaches, and repeating his offer of a commission as first Admiral of Peru. This done, the Protector issued a proclamation to the squadron promising arrears of pay to the men and

life-pensions to the officers, on the implied condition that they should desert the Chilian for the Peruvian service. This was a heavy blow at Cochrane. The seamen were in a state of actual starvation, and consequently also of mutiny, from want of pay, and their discontent was carefully fostered by San Martin's agents, Guise and Spry. Cochrane, determined to obtain money for his men by some means, offered the Spanish garrison at Callao liberty to depart in peace with two-thirds of their property, provided that the remaining third were made over to the squadron. But San Martin on hearing of this offered the garrison even more favourable terms, and Cochrane for the moment was checkmated.

In the midst of all this wrangling and confusion, the common enemy, in the shape of a large body of Spanish troops under General Cantanac, appeared on the 10th of September before Lima, evidently bent on the relief of the beleaguered garrison of Callao. Cochrane hastened ashore to San Martin's camp, and was joyfully received by all except the General. Even Guise and Spry were glad to see him, for as they said, "We shall have some fighting now the Admiral is come." But San Martin would not fight. Cochrane urged, besought, entreated, offered even to lead the cavalry himself; San Martin would not move. So General Cantanac with his three thousand men marched leisurely past the twelve thousand patriots, threw a convoy of stores and cattle into the forts of Callao, stayed there for six days, and then as leisurely retired, taking with him three millions of treasure which had been stored in the forts by the people of Lima. San Martin waited till he was gone, and then issued a proclamation announcing that he had beaten the

enemy, and pursued the fugitives. The latter sentence was true; he did send a body of men in pursuit, who were cut to pieces by Cantanac.

The squadron was by this time in such a state of destitution that Cochrane was obliged to support it by expending the uncondemned portion of the prize-money taken on previous occasions. This increased rather than allayed the discontent of the seamen, who, having no fancy to see the State's obligations towards them discharged out of what they regarded as their own property, at last broke out into open mutiny. It happened that at this conjuncture San Martin sent a considerable sum of public money, which he had hoarded for his own purposes, to await his pleasure at Ancon. This was too much for Cochrane. He sailed to Ancon, seized the whole of this money, and paid the squadron its arrears for twelve months, taking care, meanwhile, to account accurately for every dollar. San Martin's distress when he heard of this proceeding may be imagined; but finding Cochrane wholly obdurate, he was obliged finally, though with no very good grace, to approve of that which he could not prevent. In revenge, however, for this high-handed action he was careful to spread every kind of calumny against the Admiral both at Valparaiso and within the squadron itself; and, finally, sent Guise and Spry from ship to ship with offers of a year's additional pay to all men who would leave the service of Chili and serve the Protector of Peru. Such was their success that twenty-three officers and the whole of the foreign seamen abandoned their ships, leaving Cochrane with his squadron but half-manned.

At last, on the 21st of September, the fall of Callao set

the Chilian squadron free, and enabled Cochrane to sail with the *O'Higgins* and *Valdivia* (the captured *Esmeralda*) in search of two frigates which had escaped the general ruin of the Spanish navy. But first it was necessary to equip and provision his own ships at some port outside Peru, San Martin having carried his animosity so far as to refuse even water to the Chilian squadron. Cochrane therefore put in at Guayaquil, where he remained for six weeks. All classes of the people joyfully welcomed him on his arrival, and presented him with an address on his departure. It is characteristic of Cochrane that he answered this address by a brief exposition of the gospel according to Adam Smith. The lesson was badly needed, no doubt; but Dr. Primrose offering to Venus his tract on the Whistonian controversy is not more incongruous than Cochrane preaching political economy to the Guayaquileños.

Notwithstanding this temporary refit of the ships, the repairs were necessarily very incomplete. The damage received by the *O'Higgins* at Quiriquina had never been properly made good; her masts were so rotten that it was not safe to heave her down in order to repair her thoroughly; and the result was that in a sea-way she made water at the rate of six feet a day. On the voyage northward towards Mexico the leak grew daily worse, and the chain-pumps being worn out, the vessel was only kept afloat by Cochrane's personal skill as a smith, until he anchored in Fonseca Bay. Leaving that on the 6th of January, 1822, he proceeded to Acapulco, where at last he obtained intelligence of the two frigates that he sought. In spite of the unseaworthy state of his ships, he determined to

follow them, and on the voyage encountered a gale which went near to cut short his career for ever. The *O'Higgins*, as was to be expected, well-nigh foundered, while the *Valdivia* was struck by a sea which stove in her timbers, and damaged her so far that she was only kept afloat by passing a sail over the leak. In such miserable plight the two vessels arrived at Guayaquil, and there found one of the two Spanish frigates, the *Venganza*. To his inexpressible disgust Cochrane learned that emissaries from San Martin had persuaded the Spaniards to surrender both vessels to Peru, under the awful threat that El Diablo was on his way to take them; and that one of them, the *Prueba*, had actually been sent to Callao. Cochrane would listen to no such nonsense, but at once took possession of the *Venganza* in the names of Chili and Peru, and forced the Junta of Guayaquil to sign an engagement to respect this joint ownership. It is unnecessary to add that this engagement was presently repudiated. San Martin's envoys had succeeded effectively in poisoning the minds of the Guayaquileños against Cochrane, and the once friendly town would do nothing for him. Coasting south to Guambucho Cochrane found that there, too, his enemy had been at work, and had prohibited the supply even of wood and water to Chilian war-ships. His patience, however, was by this time exhausted; he went in, took what he wanted, repaired the *Valdivia*, and when he was quite ready (for no one dared to interfere with him), sailed to Callao. As he entered the harbour he found the second Spanish frigate, the *Prueba*, lying in the bay, commanded by the senior Chilian captain, who had deserted the squadron, and flying Peruvian colours. At sight of

the Chilian flagship she was hauled with all haste under the batteries, with guns housed and ports closed, in desperate fright lest she should share the fate of the *Esmeralda*. She was so tightly packed with troops to resist the dreaded attack that three men died of suffocation on the following night. Cochrane begged the authorities not to be alarmed, for that if he had wanted the *Prueba* he would have taken her in spite of all precautions in broad midday.

From Callao he wrote several intemperate letters to San Martin, demanding from him the sums due to the squadron. He was answered by a visit from one of the Protector's ministers, who offered him a large estate, the Order of the Sun (a gewgaw of San Martin's own creation) set in diamonds, and supreme command of the Chilian and Peruvian navies, if he would recall his letters and join the Protector's service. Cochrane's reply was such as to cause the messenger to leave the flagship with nervous haste; and San Martin in revenge sent envoys to Chili primed with accusations against him of every crime from piracy to petty theft, and charged to demand severe punishment for the same. Cochrane, meanwhile, went on to Valparaiso where he arrived on the 21st of June after an absence of twenty-one months.

The inhabitants received him with every manifestation of welcome, as indeed well they might. In two years and a half he had swept the Spanish war-vessels off the sea, reduced their most important fortresses, cleared the west coast of pirates, and given the country a reasonably firm basis of independence. And all this he had done at little or no cost. He had made it his

principle to force the Spaniards to pay for the squadron, and he had carried that principle into practice. The Chilian authorities were not less forward than the populace in giving him praise, and showed their confidence in him by refusing to listen to the slanderous accusations of San Martin. But beyond this they did not go. Nothing was said of any recompense, or even prize-money; they showed, indeed, pretty plainly that now that the fighting was over, they would not lament to be quit of all foreign officers. For a short time Cochrane retired to his estate in the country, where with seeds and implements imported from England he designed to give the Chilians a few lessons in agriculture. Marmont, it will be remembered, fell back on the same resource at the close of his fighting days. But no such peaceful life was in store for Cochrane. From the squadron came incessant complaints of destitution and literal nakedness; while, as if to disarm its most powerful champion, libels imputing actual theft were spread abroad about the Admiral. In high indignation Cochrane returned to his ships, and without awaiting the orders of the Government rehoisted his flag. By his own account the ill-treatment of the squadron was the work of San Martin's creatures among the Chilian Ministry, whose intention it was first to drive the crews to desertion, and then turn the ships over to Peru. But this plan was defeated by sudden changes within Peru itself.

After a very short endurance of the reign of San Martin, the people of Lima, exasperated by his cruelty, rapacity, and oppression, rose against him and forced him to abdicate. He had, however, the address to extort

from them a pension of twenty thousand dollars in consideration for his good services in taking himself away; and thus endowed he arrived, a fugitive, at Valparaiso. The new Peruvian Government, with great parade of justice, next proceeded to vote half a million dollars to twenty of the principal military officers, and to Cochrane, who had done more than any of them, its best thanks. But what exasperated Cochrane far more than this ingratitude, was the favour shown to San Martin in Valparaiso. O'Higgins, the Supreme Director, received him with high honour; and the ruling authorities at large seemed to have conspired to forget the treachery which he had meted out to Chili in devoting her resources to the foundation of his own ridiculous empire. Cochrane was not the man to allow such conduct to pass unheeded, and there were many good Chilians who thought no better of San Martin than he did. He therefore wrote to the Supreme Director, and volunteered almost in as many words to impeach San Martin. It was a false step, and injurious to himself; in fact, as hopeless a proceeding as his opposition to the vote of thanks to Lord Gambier in the teeth of the majority of the Commons. If the powers that were in Chili felt disposed to make much of San Martin, they were not likely to disgrace him at a foreigner's dictation; but of such considerations Cochrane, to his lifelong hurt, would never take account. San Martin was, undoubtedly, a rogue and a traitor; but an oppressed nationality that treats such men as they deserve runs risk of self-extinction. What to Cochrane seemed a mere desire for justice became, in the eyes of the Chilians, mere partisanship. He never ceased to importune the Government

for the payment of its dues to the squadron, and at length after long delay he received his reply: the seamen should all be paid, but ashore, not afloat; the petty officers and men should be paid first; and, payment made, every man should receive four months' furlough. This was so evidently a plan for unmanning the fleet that Cochrane refused to accede to it, and the men ultimately received their wages on board ship. But the Government attained its object equally well by neglecting the ships until but one was left seaworthy, and then ordering that one to sea without consulting the Admiral. Thus, without a ship or a man left under his command, Cochrane's position and authority were reduced to nothing.

Nor was San Martin's the only influence which prompted the Chilian Government to strike all power from Cochrane's hands. Another foreign officer of distinction, General Freire, had suffered from the same neglect as the Admiral; but having less romantic ideas about liberty, or possibly conceiving that there is no liberty without order, he had resolved to march upon Valparaiso, and overturn O'Higgins, San Martin, and all their crew. In effect he did presently become Dictator of Chili; but at this time he had advanced no further than to resolve to take matters into his own hands and to invite Cochrane to join him. His appeal placed Cochrane in a difficult position: he was unwilling either to support Freire, though an usurper of merit, or uphold O'Higgins, who was the tool of San Martin; and, above all, he wished to bear no part in a civil war. From this embarrassment he was relieved by a letter begging him to take service under the Emperor of Brazil, and to

liberate that country from Portugal as he had already delivered Chili and Peru from the thraldom of Spain. About the same time he received similar overtures from Mexico and from Greece, but for the present he decided to accept the offers of Brazil. Many of his officers, notably Grenfell, resolved to throw in their lot with him in his new command. Accordingly, having issued farewell addresses to the squadron, to the merchants, and to the "Chileños, his fellow-countrymen" at large, he sailed on the 18th of January, 1823, for Rio de Janeiro; and Chili, which thirteen months later was to entreat him to return and deliver her from the Spanish grip that was again tightening at her foolish throat,—Chili knew him no more.

This was the first, and also the best, of the oppressed nationalities with which Cochrane had to do,—the best because the Chilians showed themselves to be good sailors and brave men. We have seen what Cochrane did for Chili and Peru; we must now see what they did for him. In the first place, no portion of the money which he had deducted from the emoluments of all ranks for the pressing needs of the squadron was repaid either to him or to them; nothing was given to him for Valdivia, nothing for the capture of the *Esmeralda*. For the last service Chili did, indeed, send him a draft on Peru for one hundred and twenty thousand dollars, which Peru with great promptitude dishonoured. The estate that had been granted to him and to his family for ever was forcibly resumed by the Chilian Government; and, worse than all, he was involved in expensive litigation over vessels captured in the service of an unacknowledged State, and was cast in heavy damages by the

British Admiralty Court. No penny of this loss was made good to him by Chili. In 1845, indeed, the Republic did send him £6000, the balance which it considered to be due to him after deduction of all legitimate charges, and awarded him also an Admiral's pay for his life. Chili never quite forgot him, nor repudiated him utterly; nay, the *Almirante Cochrane* figured quite lately, and it may be figures still, among the list of Chilian ironclads. But Cochrane to the last deemed himself ill treated by Chili, and, from a British point of view, doubtless with justice. Britons are proverbially exacting towards foreigners, and are apt to forget that the punctuality and precision forced upon themselves by the busy commercial atmosphere in which they live are unintelligible to such a race as the transplanted Spaniards. Again, the position of the mercenary fighting man is a peculiar one. If he follow his calling in a commercial spirit, he must take leave of scruple, as in any other trade; if he dally with it as a pastime, he must enjoy a keen sense of the ridiculous; if he prosecute it seriously, he must look for little recompense. Cochrane strove to combine all three positions; he looked upon his command as a business without foul dealing, as an amusement without a jest, as a crusade without a sacrifice. In fact, he was a kind of destroying angel with a limited income and a turn for politics; the Chilians appreciated the destroyer, misunderstood the angel, and resented the politician. All this we must remember in treating of his relations with South America. But still more must we remember the indomitable patience, gallantry, and daring of the man who had done with three vessels the work of an army; who had done with his boats the work of a

squadron; and who had dominated the South Pacific with a sinking ship. Had Chili and Peru done their best to reward him, they must still have remained in his debt; they did not do their best, for they were unworthy alike of their independence and of the great seaman who gave it to them.

CHAPTER IX

SERVICE IN BRAZIL—BAHIA—MARANHAM

1823

THE transit of Cochrane from Chili to Brazil removes us from the Spanish to the Portuguese branch of the settlers of the new world; and from the more temperate to the tropical portions of the continent. Brazil, like her neighbours to westward, had felt in her listless, sun-dried fashion the shock of the French Revolution; and the movement had been in her case curiously complicated by the fact that, through the flight of the royal family from Portugal before the armies of France, she, the colony, had supplanted the mother-country as the headquarters of the empire. For thirteen years (1808-1821) after this accession to her importance, the prevailing restlessness found its outlet in countless insurrections and conspiracies. There was a party, numerous but for the most part unintelligent, which favoured Brazilian independence; and there was a party, weak in numbers but strong in wealth and influence, which upheld the union with Portugal. Matters came to a crisis when Don Pedro the Sixth, on his accession to the throne of Portugal in 1821, forsook the colony for the mother-country, leaving his son, Pedro, to act as Regent of Brazil. The Regent's sympathies being supposed to lean towards

independence, he was an object of suspicion to the Cortes at Lisbon, which took pains to undermine his authority by exhorting all Brazilian municipalities to take their orders from Lisbon alone. Finally the Cortes, with the object of quartering Brazilian troops in Portugal and Portuguese troops in Brazil, decreed that the armies of the mother-country and colony should be treated as one force; and, as a final stroke for its own authority, recalled the Regent to Europe. The native Brazilians thereupon issued a declaration of their independence, and named the Regent Emperor of Brazil. Pedro at first declined this honour, and prepared, in obedience to orders, to return to Portugal; but he was presently induced by popular feeling to remain, and to accept the title of Perpetual Protector and Defender of Brazil. The breach between colony and mother-country soon widened, and on the 12th of December, 1821, Pedro consented to be called Emperor. The southern provinces of his huge realm at once gave in their allegiance to the new ruler; but those of the north, including Bahia, Para, and Maranham, were held forcibly aloof by the presence of Portuguese garrisons. As in the case of Chili, the command of the sea was of vital importance to the new State in order to check the arrival of reinforcements from Europe; but Brazil had few ships of her own and no seamen, the far-sighted Portuguese having kept the coasting trade jealously in their own hands. The Brazilian Chargé d'Affaires in London was therefore instructed to enlist foreign officers and seamen, while the Ministry at Rio de Janeiro summoned Cochrane from Chili to take supreme command. The letters written to him were full of those high-flown flatteries that are inexpressible except in the

idiom of France: "Venez, Milord, l'honneur vous invite, la gloire vous appelle . . . abandonnez-vous à la réconnaissance Brésilienne, à la munificence du Prince, à la probité sans tache de l'actuel gouvernement"; and, lest other inducement should be wanting, it was decreed that all prizes taken in the war should become the property of the captors. Cochrane, being, as he said, "free for the crusade of liberty in any part of the globe," accepted the offer, and left Chili as has been already told.

He arrived at Rio de Janeiro, that harbour of all harbours, on the 13th of March, 1823, and was rapturously received by the Emperor and his Prime Minister. Nothing, however, was said about his rank or his emoluments, which, according to stipulations made before his departure from Valparaiso, were to be identical with those which he had enjoyed in Chili. Pressing the settlement of these matters upon the Brazilian Minister of Marine, he received an offer of the pay of a Portuguese admiral, "notoriously the worst in the world." He replied that he must have his Chilian pay of eight thousand dollars a year or refuse the appointment. The Minister then conceded the point, but suggested that the dollar should be reckoned at eight hundred instead of nine hundred and sixty reis; and finally, being beaten over this matter also, so juggled with the figures in the agreement as to deprive Cochrane, when ashore, of half his pay. These preliminary difficulties overcome, Cochrane made the discovery that the Minister designed to create him only a subordinate Admiral, instead of naval Commander-in-Chief. Thereupon for the second time he threatened to decline the appointment, and his firmness prevailing, he at length

came to a satisfactory agreement with this "blameless government" on the subjects of rank and pay. The Brazilian Government further undertook to repay to him a sum of sixty thousand dollars due from Chili and Peru, but endangered by his acceptance of the Brazilian command, provided always that he should render as good service to Brazil as to the provinces west of the Andes. We shall see in due time how these engagements were fulfilled on each side.

Then came the question of ships and men. The Brazilian flagship, *Pedro Primeiro*, was a fine vessel, of the class rated as sixty-fours in England, and the *Piranga* frigate appeared likewise to be a fine ship. The rest of the fleet consisted of the *Maria da Gloria*, commanded by a gallant Frenchman named Beaurepaire, the *Liberal*, *Nitherohy*, *Paraguessu*, *Carolina*, and *Guarani*, —eight ships in all. For the officers, many of those who had served in Chili, notably Crosbie and Grenfell, followed Cochrane to Brazil, where they were joined by two more named Jowett and Taylor. But the great difficulty lay in the matter of seamen. Cochrane had indeed a small nucleus of Europeans; but the new material offered to him was hopeless. The existing crews consisted mainly of the worst class of Portuguese, miserably paid, miserably disciplined, and at heart disloyal, together with a proportion of native Brazilians who were absolutely useless. The marines, again, were such fine gentlemen that they required servants to wait upon them. Plainly little could be done with such men; so there was nothing for Cochrane but to offer a bounty from his own purse to British and North American seamen, and make shift to build skeletons of efficient crews.

This done, he put to sea with a squadron of four ships only,—*Pedro Primeiro* (flag, Captain Crosbie), *Piranga* (Captain Jowett), *Maria da Gloria* (Captain Beaurepaire), and *Liberal* (Captain Garcaô), and sailed in accordance with his instructions to blockade the harbour of Bahia. He was there joined on the 1st of May by the *Nitherohy* under Captain Taylor. Three days later the Portuguese fleet was sighted sailing out of the harbour, and presently the Portuguese Admiral formed line-of-battle for action, his force consisting of one ship of the line, five frigates, five corvettes, a brig, and a schooner.[1] Cochrane's squadron was not only inferior in number of ships, but indeed in every respect; his men were untrained, undisciplined, and disaffected, and his equipment in every particular deficient. None the less, marking with his quick eye a gap in the enemy's line, he dashed into it with the flagship and cut off the four sternmost vessels from the rest. He then signalled to his squadron to attack this isolated group, while he, with his solitary flagship, held the rest of the Portuguese at bay. It is lamentable to record that this, Cochrane's only fleet-action, was hardly opened before it was abruptly closed. To his intense disgust not a ship of the squadron moved. The crews, without exception, were mutinous, and in Cochrane's own words, "Half the squadron was wanted to look after the other half." He therefore drew out of action, unhindered by the enemy, and sat down in bitterness of heart to write his report to the Minister of Marine. A document more sweeping it would be difficult to con-

[1] One ship of seventy-four guns, one of fifty, one of forty-four, one of twenty-eight, five of twenty-six, two of twenty-two, one of twenty, and one of eight guns.

ceive. Three ships, the *Piranga*, *Liberal*, and *Nitherohy*, sailed so ill as to be useless; all the cartridges had been found unserviceable, and all the spare flags had been cut up to repair them; all the guns were inefficiently fitted, all the fuses useless, all the powder execrable, all the sails rotten, all the marines idle encumbrances, and most of the seamen mutinous.

There was but one thing that he could do, to gather all the best of the officers, petty officers, and seamen, together on board the *Pedro Primeiro* so as to make one vessel thoroughly efficient, and with her and the *Maria da Gloria*, to which Beaurepaire had managed to attract a goodly number of his countrymen, to prosecute further operations as best he could. He accordingly took the bulk of the squadron to Moro San Paulo, and left it there with orders to fit out some captured coasting craft as fire-ships, while with the flagship and *Maria da Gloria* alone he continued to cruise off Bahia. Notwithstanding the weakness of his force, he made several captures, and managed effectively to cut off all supplies from the port; the Portuguese fleet remaining the while inactive under the batteries of Bahia, not daring to come out and face him even at the odds of thirteen ships to two. In the town itself the alarm was great: provisions began to fail under the rigour of the blockade; and there were terrifying reports that El Diablo was preparing fire-ships, and was shortly coming to repeat at Bahia the havoc that he had wrought in Aix Roads. Little as he could do for want of skilled hands, Cochrane resolved at least to keep their fears alive. He ordered the *Piranga* and *Maria da Gloria* to be victualled and watered for a long voyage with a view

to future operations, and prepared himself to pay the Portuguese a nocturnal visit in the flagship. Accordingly, on the night of the 12th of June, he sailed in pitch darkness nine miles up the river to the point where the Portuguese fleet lay moored under the shelter of the forts. He had just reached the outermost ships when the wind unfortunately failed, and the tide beginning to turn, he was compelled to content himself with no more than a full reconnaissance, and to drop down the river, stern-foremost, with his anchor adrag, on the top of the ebb. As a mere feat of seamanship this expedition up the river was remarkable; but as a tactical movement it was masterly. Cochrane having learned that all the officers of the fleet were going ashore to a ball on the evening of the 12th, had chosen that night for his reconnaissance, and it was in the ballroom that the Portuguese Admiral heard that the dreaded flagship was even then in the middle of his fleet. "What?" he exclaimed in amazement, "Impossible! No large ship can come up in the dark." But there was no doubt about the fact; and it became clear to the Admiral's mind that Bahia was no place for his fleet while Cochrane lay outside. He accordingly proclaimed to the weeping inhabitants his intention to evacuate the port. "The means of subsistence fail us," began this lamentable document, "and we cannot secure the entrance of provisions"; there was not a word to show that the blockading squadron consisted of two ships and the blockaded of thirteen. Finally, on the 1st of July, a report that the fire-ships were ready caused the Admiral to embark the troops of the garrison on their transports with all haste, and every soul of the

civil population that could afford it to embark themselves likewise in merchant vessels.

All this Cochrane watched with a grim smile. On that same 1st of July he gave his final orders to his three captains, Beaurepaire of the *Maria*, Taylor of the *Nitherohy*, and Thompson of the *Carolina*,—and then wrote three letters to the General, Admiral, and Junta of Bahia, which put the finishing touch on his plan of operations. With the most engaging candour he adjured them, in the name of humanity, not to attempt to escape from Bahia, for that it was in his power to take advantages that would be fatal to the venture. It was his painful duty to prevent all transports from leaving the port; and as it would be impossible to distinguish at night between troopships and passenger-ships, he feared that many innocent civilians might unavoidably suffer, if the Portuguese commanders should persist in their intention. The warning, as Cochrane had anticipated, was laughed at for an empty threat; and on the following day the whole Portuguese force, together with a multitude of the citizens, with all their movable property, got under way, and in sublime trust in the protection of the men-of-war dropped down to the sea. At the river's mouth the huge fleet, thirteen war-vessels and nearly seventy transports, passed the *Pedro Primeiro* and *Maria da Gloria*, which, contrary to expectation, made no effort to attack them, and by their inaction doubtless provoked additional sneers at the warning of the previous day.

Little did the fugitives know the man with whom they had to deal. The flotilla was no sooner clear of the harbour than the two Brazilian war-ships dashed in

among the sternmost vessels, and ordered them right and left to bring-to. Being defenceless they were bound at their peril to obey; and then their fate was sealed. Cochrane's orders were clear and precise, and every one of his men knew exactly what to do. As fast as a ship was taken, her main and mizzenmasts were disabled so that she could only sail before the wind, all arms were thrown overboard, and all water-casks were broken up until enough water only was left to suffice her, on short allowance, for her return voyage to Bahia. To Bahia the wind was fair abaft: to Bahia Cochrane ordered them to go or take the consequences; and to Bahia they sorrowfully returned, wiser than when they had started. As we have said, Cochrane seldom took, but rather forced his enemy to give. So through the day and night of the 2nd of July the tail of the great Portuguese convoy fell off and turned backward in despair, as a herd of fallow-deer breaks up and turns back before a terrier; and the war-ships, more cowardly than fallow-bucks, led the flight and left the transports to their fate. The *Maria da Gloria*, cumbered by much service in taking prizes, dropped astern, and the flagship continued the chase alone. Next day the *Carolina*, *Nitherohy*, and a merchantman that had been taken into the service by Cochrane, came up with him and increased the havoc among the unhappy transports. As night fell these three vessels likewise dropped out of sight, and the flagship, disdaining all captures, pressed on once more alone in chase of the thirteen war-vessels and their convoy. On the following morning the Portuguese Admiral at length turned with his whole squadron upon the *Pedro Primeiro*. But, though they pressed her hard, they could effect little

against superior manœuvring and seamanship, and soon giving up the chase they resumed their place in the van of the flight. No sooner were they on their way than Cochrane resumed his former tactics. As night fell he dashed in among the nearest transports, firing right and left till they brought-to, boarded them, cut away their topmasts, disabled the rigging, threw the arms overboard, took the officers' parole not to serve again against Brazil until exchanged, and left them. On the next day he dealt out the same measure to a number of passenger-ships, leaving them to the mercy of the frigates, for he would not weaken the force of the flagship by the manning of prizes. At dusk on this day he observed six large vessels detach themselves from the main convoy, and pressing all sail in chase came up to them next morning. As he had suspected, they contained a force of several thousand men, which was designed to reinforce the garrisons in the province of Maranham. The whole were boarded, disarmed, and disabled; and leaving them thus, not indeed wrecks, but hopeless cripples on the water, Cochrane returned to the pursuit of the main body. The weather now became hazy, and nothing more was seen of the Portuguese until the 11th of July; but the chase had now brought pursued and pursuers to the Equator, where both for a time lay becalmed. At last, on the 14th, the wind came and carried the *Pedro Primeiro* whither Cochrane wished,—straight against the Portuguese war-vessels. They kept themselves so close together, however, that he dared not attack them; nor was it until the 16th that he saw his opportunity, ran in among them, and singling out one

frigate, poured into her a crushing broadside. So great was the effect that the frigate was unable to answer the fire; but as the *Pedro Primeiro* tacked to give her a second broadside there was a loud crack, and her mainsail split in two. Further pursuit being for the present impossible, Cochrane, with this final kick, let the Portuguese go. The chase had lasted for fifteen days; it had begun in latitude 13° south and ended in latitude 5° north. Of the sixty or seventy ships that had started with the Portuguese fleet from Bahia, but thirteen remained with it when Cochrane was forced to abandon the pursuit; half of the army had been taken, as well as merchant-vessels too many to count, and the whole Portuguese force driven in hopeless demoralisation from the South Atlantic. Taylor, indeed, taking up the chase in the *Nitherohy*, hunted the scattered ships actually into the Tagus, and there burned four of them under the guns of a line-of-battle ship. But for Cochrane was reserved greater work even than this.

Knowing that the six detached ships contained only a portion of the reinforcements for Maranham, he turned south-westward to that port in the hope, not only of intercepting the rest, but of bringing the whole province beneath the authority of Brazil. On the 26th of July he sailed into the river Maranham and hoisted Portuguese colours. The authorities, who were anxiously awaiting the expected reinforcements, saw the Portuguese flag with joy, and promptly sent off a brig-of-war to him with despatches and congratulations. Great was the surprise of the captain of the brig, one Garcaô, to find himself a prisoner on board the Brazilian flagship, and his despatches,

revealing the whole of the Portuguese plans, in the hands of the Brazilian Admiral. Cochrane, however, was kind to him. He offered to release him on condition that he should carry letters for him to the Junta of Maranham; and, having filled the poor man with tales of a large fleet of Brazilian war-vessels in the offing, and of transports full of Brazilian troops sailing under their convoy, the whole close at hand, and only outstripped by the flagship through her superior qualities as a sailer, he sent him ashore to do his work. Garcaô, who, as a seaman, could appreciate the excellence of the *Pedro Primeiro*, was duly impressed with this story, and returned to the city big with intelligence of an overwhelming force on the point of disembarkation. The letters to the Junta on being opened were found to confirm his statement in every particular. The strength of Lord Cochrane's force, naval and military, left him no doubt of his success in freeing the province of Maranham from the yoke of Portugal. Bahia, as they no doubt were aware, had been evacuated: the troops, which had driven the Portuguese from the South Sea, were at his back; and he trusted that the authorities at Maranham would not compel him to let them loose, exasperated as they were by Portuguese cruelty and oppression, upon that beautiful province. Let the Junta therefore make its choice, —to join the imperial cause of Brazil or to take the consequences.

The story, if we look into the heart of it, was not really so untrue as it seems; for the whole might of Brazil was present in the river of Maranham in the person of a single broad-limbed, red-haired, blue-eyed Scotchman. Be that as it may, the trick produced the

anticipated effect. Proposals for capitulation arrived immediately in answer to his summons, but, being conditional only, were as promptly rejected; and then the *Pedro Primeiro* made sail, and moving majestically up the river,—the first line-of-battle ship that had ever attempted to navigate it,—anchored abreast of the fort. Next morning the members of the Junta, together with the bishop, came on board the flagship, and agreed without more ado to surrender city, fort, and shipping unconditionally. This done, they went ashore again, evidently with the intention of violating their agreement, but a shot fired over the town from the *Pedro Primeiro*, speedily brought them to their senses. The Portuguese ensign was hauled down, and the flag of Brazil floated in its place.

Cochrane's next duty was to make arrangements for a public declaration of independence, and for the election of a provisional Government. The former function was fixed for the following day (July 28th) and carried out with due solemnity. The latter, which was to be preceded by a general swearing of allegiance to the Emperor of Brazil, was appointed to take place on the 1st of August, all the details being, of course, settled by Cochrane himself. "Taking the necessary oaths," he announced, with inimitable coolness and condescension, to the bewildered inhabitants, "and the election of a civil Government are acts which must be deliberately performed. Citizens, let us proceed gravely and methodically without tumult, haste, or confusion; and let the act be accomplished in a manner worthy the approbation of his Imperial Majesty, and which shall give no cause for regret, and leave no room for amendment." Now,

however, came the very difficult task of getting rid of the Portuguese garrison. Cochrane had already granted terms to the troops, permitting them to embark with all the honours of war, and to go home or whither they would; but it was imperative that they should be got on board ship immediately, lest the protracted delay in the advent of Cochrane's imaginary armament should tempt them to resistance. With delightful pedantry Cochrane pointed out that immunity from risk of military interference or intimidation was of the essence of all civil election, and that he must therefore request all the soldiers who intended to return to Portugal, to assemble without delay at the appointed place of embarkation. On the 1st of August, accordingly, the shipment of the garrison was accomplished; and it was none too soon. Some regiments, indeed, refused at first to go on board, and were only driven thither by threats and some small display of force. But others, already embarked, lay under the guns of the *Pedro Primeiro*, and with so many at his mercy Cochrane was able to intimidate the rest. For more than a fortnight these unhappy men lay in the river under guard of the flagship and of three small men-of-war, which had passed by the capitulation into Cochrane's hands. One can imagine their fury as day succeeded day without the slightest sign of Brazilian fleet or army, while they lay cowering under the guns of their own surrendered vessels, helpless as rabbits in a hutch. On the 20th of August they were at last ordered to sail for Lisbon, and with this bloodless expulsion of the garrison, the rule of Portugal over Maranham came to an end for ever.

But the work of conquest was still incomplete while the province of Para remained untaken. Unwilling, for reasons that will presently appear, to leave Maranham himself, Cochrane manned one of his captured brigs and sent her away under Grenfell's command to repeat the same trick at Para. Grenfell took with him a summons from the Admiral to the Governor and Junta, dated on board the *Pedro Primeiro* off the bar of the Para, with a blank to be filled in with the day of his arrival in the river. Once again the trick was successful. Para, like Maranham, surrendered without striking a blow; yielding up at the same time a fine frigate, afterwards named the *Imperatrice*, whereof Cochrane was specially anxious to obtain possession. Grenfell, a man only less resolute and daring than Cochrane himself, was badly wounded by the dagger of a hired assassin; but, with this exception, no drop of blood was shed in the campaign that drove the Portuguese both from Maranham and Para.

Meanwhile Cochrane was busily occupied with the difficulties of civil administration. The provisional Junta which he had appointed immediately after the capitulation had shown itself untrustworthy, and was superseded after little more than a week's tenure of office by a second, chosen, as Cochrane had ordained, by popular election. The new Junta, however, proved to be little more satisfactory than its predecessor. Its first step was to claim that all property taken from the Portuguese should be placed at its disposal, in defiance of the imperial decree which had assigned all captures to the captors. Cochrane promptly put a stop to this by embarking all movable property on a couple of prize-vessels, and shipping it off to Rio for

adjudication. He then required of the Junta a list of all moneys found in the chests of the Portuguese Government, of all military stores, and of all Government property whatever, all this also having, in virtue of the decree, passed into the possession of the squadron. Lastly, having also on his hands much perishable property, and one hundred and twenty captured vessels of which he could not readily dispose, he agreed to make this portion over to the merchants for two-thirds of its value, pending the proper settlement of the whole question by the courts at Rio. A part of the sum thus received he lent to the Junta for the immediate expenses of administration.

It soon, however, became apparent that this governing body could not be trusted in any work whatever. To Cochrane's intense disgust, these elected rulers no sooner found themselves in power than they dismissed every existing official, civil and military, and filled the vacant places with their own friends, relations, and dependants. Most of them, moreover, being in debt to the wealthy Portuguese merchants, conceived this to be a favourable opportunity for getting quit of their obligations; and to this end, ignoring the fact that all classes equally with themselves had sworn allegiance to Brazil, they introduced an armed rabble, under the name of Irregulars, into the town to frighten their obnoxious creditors away. Why Cochrane should have felt surprise or disappointment at such proceedings it is difficult to understand. He had indeed given these Brazilians "liberty"; but it is a poor revolution that does not cancel all debts, and give every man a lucrative appointment. Moreover, he had taken all the

plunder for the deliverers; a course which, however warranted by imperial sanction, was not likely to commend itself to the delivered. He determined, none the less, to extinguish the second Junta as summarily as the first; and to that end he submitted a scheme for the election of a third, not by the town only, but by the whole province. Two days later the Irregulars rose and, after plundering most of the Portuguese houses, deposed their appointed commander in favour of a new one of their own choice. This was too much. Cochrane declined to recognise this nominee, and threatened to interpose by force unless these scandalous doings were brought to a close at once. Order was thereupon restored, and Cochrane now thought that he might venture to leave Maranham to itself for a little while. He did not, however, dare to fix the date of the new election at less than a month ahead; and he took care to inform the Junta on his departure that he was going no farther than Para, lest under the idea that he was safely out of the way it might begin its pranks anew. This done, he sailed for Rio de Janeiro and arrived there on the 9th of November. He had been absent for seven months, and in that short time he had delivered the three northern provinces of Brazil for ever from the rule of Portugal. He had hunted a squadron of thirteen men-of-war from Bahia to Lisbon, driven thousands of troops to follow them in disgrace, captured innumerable vessels and vast quantities of military stores; and all this he had done with a single ship and without the loss of a man. It was, and remains, a feat without parallel in the history of war.

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CHAPTER X

CLOSE OF SERVICE WITH BRAZIL

1823–1825

On his return to Rio Cochrane was welcomed by the Emperor in person, who came on board the flagship to greet him, and by the gratitude and enthusiasm of all true patriots. The General Assembly voted him the thanks of the nation, and the Emperor conferred upon him the decoration of the Imperial Order of the Cruzeiro and the title of Marquis of Maranham, together with an estate wherewith to uphold these dignities. This estate, it is hardly necessary to add, he never received. In truth, there had been great changes since his departure from Rio. The Prime Minister, Jose Bonifacio de Andrada, who had summoned him to the Brazilian service, was according to his lights a patriotic man, and therefore necessarily obnoxious to the party, still numerous and powerful, which desired to maintain the connection with Portugal. This Portuguese faction was strong in the Assembly, and sought to increase its strength still further by stripping the Emperor of all but nominal authority; an enterprise that was the more feasible inasmuch as Brazil, so far, had not determined the constitution of its Government.

Having succeeded in ousting Andrada, the Emperor's most trusted counsellor, this faction went to the length of requiring the Emperor to divest himself of his crown in their presence. At this moment Cochrane arrived, and being appealed to by the Emperor for advice, recommended without hesitation that His Majesty should support his own dignity "constitutionally." In the absence of a constitution of any kind Cochrane's counsel was, to say the least of it, oracular; but Don Pedro, interpreting it according to Cromwellian precedent, dismissed the recalcitrant Assembly by military force. Cochrane then volunteered further advice and embodied it in a letter to the Emperor, first applauding the wisdom of that potentate in dissolving his Parliament, and next urging him to anticipate all constitution-mongers and constituent assemblies by producing a constitution of his own. The suggestion was adopted, and a suitable instrument, framed of course on the British model, was duly promulgated.

To the end of his days Cochrane flattered himself that his advice had been instrumental in establishing the political liberties of Brazil; but he did not see that his interference was raising up a host of enemies against himself. Within ten days after the writing of his letter he grew wiser, and took care to secure confirmation of the patent on which he depended for his rank and pay. Meanwhile he also sought the adjudication of the vast amount of prize-property taken at Maranham, wherein the flagship's share alone amounted to more than one hundred and twenty thousand dollars; and then his troubles began. A prize-

tribunal, wherein the Portuguese faction possessed a majority of nine members to four, was duly appointed, and, having been appointed, did for the present nothing. Cochrane, becoming anxious as to the safety of the money that he had advanced to the Junta of Maranham, applied to the Minister for an adjustment of the accounts. The Minister did nothing. Cochrane then begged that, at least, the seamen might receive their wages. The answer was an offer of three months' pay only, which was indignantly refused as little short of an insult to men who had done such good service to Brazil. The Ministers now went beyond passive obstruction and became openly obnoxious. They publicly ignored Cochrane's rank by ordering a ship on service without consulting him, and by describing him in the *Gazette* as Commander-in-Chief of the naval forces at Rio only. These last insults were more than Cochrane could endure; but although, in deference to his protests, the order to the ship was countermanded, not the slightest notice was taken of the limitation of his rank. The prize-tribunal, taking its cue from the Ministry, likewise began to assume the offensive; it openly denied his right to have taken prizes at all at Maranham, and ordered him to refund all sums that he had received in ransom for property; it even went so far as to declare him worthy of corporal punishment. Meanwhile the prizes themselves were left unguarded, and were plundered right and left without respect to the rights of the fleet, so that their value was irredeemably impaired. The meaning of the whole of these proceedings was plain enough. The Brazilians were ready enough to allow foreigners to fight their battles, but had

no idea of suffering them to interfere in the division of the spoil.

In the midst of all these quarrels there arose an insurrection in Pernambuco, having for its avowed object the establishment of an independent Republic. The Ministers, in their jealousy of Cochrane, despatched an expedition thither to restore order without either consulting him or offering him the command. The expedition, as might have been expected, failed egregiously. On its return the unfortunate Emperor ordered Cochrane to sail with four ships and recover Pernambuco for him. It was easy to give such an order, but as all the foreign seamen, who alone were of the slightest service, had quitted their ships in disgust, it was difficult to execute it; and the difficulty was increased by a new decision of the prize-tribunal, to the effect that no vessels should be reckoned lawful prize unless captured at a certain distance from the shore. As the squadron was designed to blockade Pernambuco, it was obvious that this rule would prevent it from making any captures at all, and would practically leave the ships of the insurgents free to carry out their intentions unmolested. Once more the Emperor came to the rescue with promises to pay to the squadron the value of all its prizes, whether adjudged good or bad, and therewith Cochrane undertook to conciliate the seamen. The Emperor, however, with the best intentions, could not fulfil his promises, and this settlement likewise broke down. Then came a new cause for wrangling. The Ministers, ignoring Cochrane's previous commission as permanent First Admiral of Brazil, sent him a new one appointing him "Commander-in-Chief during the present war," a broad hint that it

was time for him to take his departure. A few more insults brought matters to a crisis, and on the 20th of March, 1824, Cochrane tendered his resignation. Unfortunately affairs in Pernambuco wore at this moment so threatening an aspect that even his enemies hesitated to let him go. He was therefore pressed for the present to stay; and rather weakly, though most generously, he consented.

In April news arrived of the actual secession of Pernambuco, which was followed by the even more serious intelligence that the Portuguese were fitting out an expedition for the recapture of the northern provinces. Not even this could check the animosity of the Brazilian Ministers. On the 24th of May Grenfell arrived at Rio from Para with the captured frigate *Imperatrice*, and was received not, as he deserved, with thanks, but with an order putting him under arrest; while, as a crowning outrage, his own papers and the treasure that he had brought with him were forcibly seized. In the following month a design even more sinister was discovered against Cochrane himself. It was arranged that during his absence ashore the flagship should be searched for money falsely alleged to be concealed therein, and that to hinder his interference his house should meanwhile be surrounded by a guard of soldiers. This guard was actually in position on the night preceding the day fixed for this secret attack, when Cochrane received from a friendly hand a warning as to what was going forward. With his usual energy he climbed over his garden-fence, —those who have seen Brazilian sentries can understand that their vigilance is easily eluded—took horse, and galloped off straight to the Emperor's palace in the

country. He was told that His Majesty was in bed. "No matter," he answered; "in bed or out of bed I must see him." The Emperor, hearing his voice, awoke and came out to him, and the pair then and there patched up a simple little trick whereby the whole plot was quite innocently upset. One wonders how Cochrane could have permitted even his attachment to the Emperor to retain him in such a service; but the man was nothing if not chivalrous and loyal.

Thus, with incessant wrangling, plot, and counterplot, six months of the year 1824 passed away, and the recovery of Pernambuco remained as remote as ever. At last the Emperor undertook to deliver a definite sum of two hundred thousand dollars for the squadron, and having wrung the money out of his reluctant Ministers, enabled Cochrane to recall his crews to the ships. Cochrane himself was likewise soothed by a fresh patent granting a pension of half his pay, to himself for life and to his wife in case of his death, if he should elect to leave the Brazilian service at the close of the war. Thus at length, on the 2nd of August, the squadron put to sea, in convoy of twelve hundred troops; and having landed the soldiers, pursuant to orders, at a point eighty miles from Pernambuco, arrived before the port on the 18th. Cochrane's first move was to summon the insurgents to return to their allegiance under penalty of a bombardment. Their leader, one Carvalho, answered by reminding Cochrane of the ill-treatment that he had suffered at Rio, and offering him a large bribe to join their cause. The reply was an opening of the bombardment, which, however, was soon stopped by the breakdown of the only available mortar-vessel.

But the mere display of force was sufficient, for though the squadron was shortly after driven from its anchorage by heavy gales, the army made an easy capture of the city under the terror created by the bursting of a few shells and by the name of Cochrane.

Pernambuco was not the only place that had fallen from its allegiance, and Cochrane was compelled to proceed northward along the coast, restoring order as he went, till finally, on the 9th of November, he found himself face to face with his own nursling, the province of Maranham. In that quarter there was no question of an independent Republic, but simply incessant squabbles between the different factions of Imperialists. The President, one Bruce, who had been a member of the original Junta, was in arms against the officer commanding the troops, and had actually enlisted the negro population on his side. There was thus all the danger, and those who have lived in the tropics will appreciate it, of a war of race and colour. On the other hand, Bruce's opponents, not content with fighting against him, had marshalled themselves under several varieties of the imperial standard and were busily fighting against each other. Altogether the last state of Maranham was, as Cochrane sorrowfully confessed, worse than the first, and deliverance from the Portuguese yoke a curse rather than a blessing,—a sad, though not unwholesome lesson to liberators. To take over the military command and drive Bruce's negroes into durance on board ship were tasks comparatively simple; but to cope with the refractory President was by no means so easy. The respectable inhabitants petitioned Cochrane to depose him. Cochrane replied most injudiciously by

asserting that he could not depend upon the support of the Government at Rio, and proceeded, excusably perhaps though with doubtful propriety, to detail the whole of his grievances in support of his contention. The French and British consuls now began to complain to him of outrages inflicted on their fellow-subjects by the lawless Brazilians; and Cochrane finally took the decisive step of shipping Bruce to Rio, and setting up a new government on his own account,—the fourth within less than eighteen months. The action was, of course, attacked by his enemies at Rio, and calumnies against him were sedulously circulated, not only in Brazil but in Europe.

Weary of such thankless work Cochrane, on the 1st of January, 1825, tendered his resignation for the fourth time. No notice whatever was taken of it, and his attention was presently distracted by a fresh outbreak of disorder at Maranham. This having been put down, it occurred to him that, having failed to obtain from the central Government the refund of the money advanced to the Junta of Maranham in 1823, he would now demand it from the Junta itself. This, of course, gave rise to fresh disputes; the Junta steadily refusing to comply, and Cochrane as steadfastly insisting on his claim. As a compromise he offered to accept one-fourth of the sum in satisfaction of the whole, but the Junta declined to pay even so much. He then ordered the Junta to pay no claims until those of the squadron had been satisfied; but as that astute body had already established a system of paying no debts whatever, this expedient produced no effect. The Junta then offered him bills for the amount at five months. To the casual

reader there is something irresistibly ludicrous in this solemn tendering of worthless paper, but to Cochrane at the time it was exasperating in the last degree. He went ashore, and tried by a long and severe lecture to impress upon these refractory men that they were bound in honour to discharge this debt; but the phrase "in honour" being meaningless to them naturally carried no weight. In the midst of this controversy he was surprised by the receipt of a letter from an obscure patriot, intimating that it was his intention to assume the Presidency of the Province. Never doubting but that this individual had been properly appointed, Cochrane invited him by all means to assume the office; till on demanding his credentials, he discovered that the new President could show no warrant other than his own assurance. Cochrane thereupon, of course, refused to permit him to take up the appointment; and therewith, equally of course, trouble and intrigue broke out afresh. Martial law was now proclaimed, and the aspirant to the Presidency shipped off to Rio; and then the Junta, seeing that the Admiral's patience was exhausted, wisely paid a first instalment of the debt that he had claimed. The money was at once distributed to the crews.

Cochrane by this time was fairly worn out by the incessant worry of maintaining order in this disorderly country. The central authority at Rio did, indeed, approve his various actions as he reported them, but they helped him neither with instructions nor support. He was sick of his task not only for its thanklessness, but because it was really no part of an Admiral's functions to do dirty work for a worthless administration, least of all in latitude 3° south of the Equator. He

therefore resolved to recruit his own health and that of his men by a cruise up to cooler latitudes, and accordingly, shifting his flag into the *Piranga*, he put to sea on the 18th of May. By the 11th of June he had travelled to the north of the Azores, where meeting strong gales he made the discovery that the mainmast and several spars were unserviceable, and that the running rigging was as rotten as the masts. An examination of the salt provisions shipped at Maranham revealed the fact that these were in the same condition, through a contractor's roguery, as the rigging; and that, in fact, there were little more than a week's supplies on board. As it was obviously out of the question to undertake a six weeks' voyage under such conditions he bore up for Portsmouth, and anchored at Spithead, with his provisions absolutely exhausted, on June 26th, 1825.

Then came a fresh series of quarrels with the Brazilian envoy in London. Cochrane applied to him for wages for his men, and for money wherewith to refit the ship. The envoy produced two months' pay for the crew, but declared himself unable from lack of funds to find more. In a weak moment Cochrane, in order to supply his men with provisions and to keep them together, sent the envoy from his own purse a cheque for £2000 The envoy took the money, charged against it the amount already advanced for the pay of the men, alleged an error in the accounts of certain payments made at Maranham, and concluded by intimating that the whole transaction left Cochrane in debt to the Legation to the amount of £25. The rest of the story is soon told. The envoy, hearing that the command of the Greek navy had been offered to Cochrane, asked if it were true that

he had accepted it. Cochrane replied enigmatically that while he was in the Brazilian service he could not be in the Greek, and that he had neither accepted nor refused the command. The envoy rejoined that he was sorry to hear that Cochrane had resolved to quit the navy of Brazil, but ordered him, rather inconsistently, to take the *Piranga* back to Rio as soon as possible. Cochrane refused to obey; whereupon the envoy stopped all wages and supplies and informed the second in command of the *Piranga* that Lord Cochrane had left the service. The officer refused to disclaim his Admiral, but the men, unfed and unpaid, mutinied and deserted in a body. On the 29th of October Cochrane received orders from Rio to return thither at once. He informed the envoy of his readiness to comply; but three days later, peace having meanwhile been signed between Portugal and Brazil, the envoy ordered Cochrane's officers to "disengage themselves from all obedience to his command." And so stormily ended Cochrane's connection with the navy of Brazil.

For many years after he continued to urge his claims upon the Brazilian Government, with little or no success. The money that he had advanced to the envoy was never repaid to him; and apart from the gains that he forfeited owing to the refusal of the prize-court to condemn his prizes, the damages awarded against him and the expensive litigation which followed involved him in heavy losses. It is not our intention to discuss in detail the long dispute, still less to decide between the contending parties. The controversy lasted for thirty years; indeed Cochrane's narrative of his services, published in 1859, is more than half of it occupied with the advocacy of his case.

Each side undoubtedly felt aggrieved, and each probably with more justice than the other was willing to allow. That Cochrane's transcendent services would have been cheaply purchased at the cost of all the claims that he advanced by virtue of the Emperor's original decree is beyond dispute; it may be granted also that, though in passing from Bahia to the northern provinces he exceeded his instructions, he justified his initiative by his success. But it is abundantly evident that his success was unwelcome to the wealthy and powerful party that still clung to the Portuguese connection; and the members of that party may well have felt disgusted when a foreign officer, after a seven months' cruise, returned to claim property worth millions of dollars lately belonging to their friends. The apparent ease with which Cochrane had achieved his marvellous triumphs would in itself seem to brand the reward assigned to him as excessive. It is true that, according to British notions, his position was unassailable; but it was too much to expect punctilious fulfilment of engagements from such a people as the Brazilian. The whole case is to a great extent one of mutual misunderstanding. Cochrane could not conceive of a nation deaf to every call of honour, callous to every feeling of gratitude, and blind to the ineffable advantages of "liberty"; the Brazilians failed utterly to comprehend a man who gave them more than they either desired or deserved, and then, without pausing to help himself, claimed from them his guerdon according to the letter of his bond. Take the mere nationality of the parties concerned: on the one side, a Scotchman of genius and energy even more than

Caledonian; on the other, degenerate Portuguese, ignorant, slothful, torpid, and parboiled; could two natures be found less sympathetic than these? Again, we must not forget Cochrane's intervention in the quarrel between the Emperor and the Assembly. That he acted with the honest endeavour to promote the true interests of the country we cannot doubt; but we can well understand native indignation against the foreigner who, summoned to fight battles, took upon himself to impose constitutions. Lastly, we must not overlook Cochrane's sudden and abrupt flight to England. We have seen the perfectly intelligible explanation which he put forward to defend it; but can any one suppose that such a reason would satisfy the Brazilian Government? To run up from the south of the line to the Azores without permission from headquarters was surely to strain an Admiral's discretionary powers to breaking-point, to say nothing of the necessity suddenly discovered in latitude 31° north of proceeding to Spithead. The Brazilians, conscious that they had thwarted him in the prosecution of his claims to prize-money, naturally imagined that he meant to hold the ship in pledge until those claims should be discharged. It was nothing to them that he pressed rights on behalf, not only of himself, but also of the whole squadron; in his place they would probably have taken good care of themselves and left the squadron to shift for itself, and therefore expected that he would do likewise. It is not surprising, then, that they should have jumped at the opportunity which he gave them of dismissing him with what they probably conceived to be disgrace. He had shown in his dealings with them a masterful spirit which made

him a terrible subordinate; and Cochrane was a man whom to hate was also to dread.

Nevertheless it is something more than sentimental preference for a great fellow-countryman that enlists and retains our sympathy with Cochrane in his dealings with Brazil. We cannot even repress a fellow-feeling with him in the sudden access of home-sickness, unrecognised perhaps as such, but irresistible, which we strongly suspect to have been the true influence that led him to his northern cruise. It is ever weary work to spin ropes of sand, but ten times weary for a white man under a tropical sun. He had borne with much from the Brazilians, and whatever the issue of his controversy with them, the fact remains that they are perpetually in his debt. The liberation of Brazil was committed to his charge, and he achieved it, almost miraculously achieved it. He then strove hard, though it was no part of his duty, to introduce something like sound administration, justice, and order, and he was rewarded by insult and neglect. That he should have turned his back hastily, awkwardly, and without dignity upon the worthless folk for whom he had wrought so much, we can well afford to overlook and to forget. But we cannot forget, for it will outlive all the innumerable revolutions of Brazil, the great campaign wherein he drove, with his single ship, a Portuguese fleet and a Portuguese army from the tropic of Capricorn to the Tagus. It is not only the highest flight of Cochrane's genius, but a possession for ever in the history of naval warfare.

CHAPTER XI

SERVICE IN GREECE

1826–1827

It might reasonably have been expected that after the lessons of Chili and Brazil, Cochrane would have eschewed further dealing with oppressed nationalities, and left them to fight their battles for themselves. Most unfortunately it was not so. He had been in England for little more than a month before he was pressed by some of his friends to devote his great genius to the cause of Greek independence. "Lord Cochrane," wrote Sir Francis Burdett, who had not yet swung over from Radicalism to Toryism, "I trust will be the liberator of Greece. What a glorious title!" he added, with all the fervour of a feather-headed philanthropist who will cheerfully sacrifice himself and his friends on the altar of a phrase. Fortunately it is not necessary in this place to go deeply into the unsavoury story of the Greek rebellion. It has been told by men who loved Greece and fought for her, and has not failed to kindle every one of them to a positive eloquence of contempt. The French Revolution, of course, turned as many heads in Greece as in any country; and by its fertility in lofty phrases

commended itself specially to a people richer in fine words than in great deeds. So the Greeks talked their loudest, the men of "Athenian liberty," the women, in defiance of Aristotle, of "Spartan virtue"; and a gang of "Counting-house Catilines, bankrupt merchants and intriguing adventurers," founded a secret society, and set rolling the ball of revolution. In 1821, Sultan Mahmoud being then overwhelmed by intestine strife and foreign aggression, the Greeks began the work by the indiscriminate massacre of ten or fifteen thousand unoffending Mussulmans. They next proceeded to attack the Turkish garrisons in the Morea, and having received the capitulation of a certain number, broke faith with them after their kind, and slaughtered alike prisoners of war and innocent population with uncommon zest. At Tripolitza they thus made an end of some eight thousand men, women, and children. The Turks naturally replied by reprisals in kind; but, as one English champion of Greece is fain to confess, in any comparison of the conduct of both sides the palm of humanity must be given to the Turks. Putting aside, however, all question of humanity as entirely out of place in a struggle of this kind, the Greeks obtained very striking successes in 1821, and maintained them more or less throughout 1822 and 1823. They fought creditably on land; and at sea, under the leadership of Kanares and Miaoulis, displayed gallantry and heroism of a really high order. But, as usually happens, the insurgents, instead of following up their advantages, forsook them for the pleasure of fighting among themselves. There was no semblance of national feeling in the

movement. The peasantry were indeed penetrated by a profound, if narrow, sentiment of local attachment; but the leaders, and they were numerous enough for the conduct of a dozen revolutions, thought of no interest but their own. Folly, vanity, and rapacity were their dominant characteristics,—qualities which invariably fatten on the soil of revolution.

None the less, these self-seeking "patriots" were sufficiently cunning to cultivate a show of unity for the benefit of their admirers in Western Europe, and to that end had formed a National Assembly at Epidaurus in December, 1821. The device was a clever one, for, as Mr. Finlay has pointed out, it did a good deal to deceive Europe, if little to organise Greece. The Greek cause received further help in January, 1824, through the arrival of Byron, who, weary of singing his sorrows to a too sympathetic world, sought relief from inaction in the work of an amateur liberator. Through his influence in England the Greeks obtained the one thing needful to consummate their demoralisation,—a loan. It was not long before Byron found out that he had been mistaken in the Greeks, and began to tremble, not for the bankers who had taken the contract for the loan, but for the misguided individuals who had subscribed to it. General Gordon, who knew the members of the Greek executive, summed them up as "with *perhaps* one exception, no better than public robbers." With the advent of this first loan a disastrous civil war between the patriots came to an end, both sides hastening to enjoy this unlooked-for plunder. But even this slight and indeed doubtful advantage was wholly thrown away; no measures were taken to reduce

the country to order, nor to prepare for further resistance against the Turks. The Greek leaders were far too much engrossed by their own affairs to attend to such trifles as these. And meanwhile Sultan Mahmoud, the one great man who towers high above all others in this sordid history, had quietly matured his plans, had summoned aid from Mohammed Ali in Egypt, and through the agency of Ibrahim Pasha had, at the close of 1825, already half throttled the much-vaunted Greek Revolution.

Such was the state of things in Greece when Cochrane was invited into the struggle for Greek independence. The whole movement was in peril of being crushed; nay, had been proved by the action of its leaders to deserve to be crushed. But now a new activity began to agitate the Greek Committee in London, that marvellous body whose career so aptly summarises our national failing for the conversion of sentimental to commercial ends. The sentiment respecting Greece was, of course, sufficiently widespread: Shelley had consecrated it by the dedication of *Hellas* to one of the many worthless Greek leaders; Byron had apotheosised it by the sacrifice of the self which he, and Europe after him, most ardently worshipped; hysterical speechmakers exalted it with cheap tears and cheaper phrases; finally, astute bankers and tradesmen sucked thereout no small advantage. Not one of the sentimentalists knew anything whatever about Greece. Their sympathies were with the ancient glory of Hellas and the treasures of art that lie hoarded in its soil; but with these they must needs confound a population of lawless savages who, because

they occupied the fatherland of Homer and Plato, were therefore, against all evidence of history and common sense, rated as lineal descendants of classical Athens. But for this confusion of thought they might possibly have averted the bombardment of the Acropolis by judicious bribes to the Turkish commanders. As things were, they spent money in freighting ships with water-colour paints for the benefit of an artistic nation. A glance at the leading members of the Committee sufficiently explains these vagaries. Sir Francis Burdett and Mr. Hobhouse represented the sentimental element, while the commercial interests were embodied in the persons of Mr. Edward Ellice, contractor for the first, and Messrs. Ricardo, contractors for the second Greek loan. Mr. Joseph Hume and Sir John Bowring appear to have combined both sentiment and commerce, by no means with the happiest results. As might have been expected, the activity of such a Committee found vent in the floating of a second Greek loan of £2,000,000 sterling, wherewith a suitable champion was to be engaged for the final accomplishment of Greek independence.

That Cochrane should have been selected for this work was, in the light of his successes in South America, obvious enough; but he was by no means disposed immediately to accept the commission. Ardent as the most enthusiastic Philhellene in the cause of Greece, he had learnt from Chili and Brazil something of the ways of an oppressed nationality. Nor were his friends unanimous in pressing him to take up the Greek command; one at least warned him against the modern Greeks as a shifty and treacherous race, and urged him

to have nothing to do with them. But the influence of men like Burdett, who knew nothing about Greek affairs and took no trouble to learn anything, unfortunately prevailed with him, and before the end of August, 1825, when his connection with Brazil was not yet finally severed, he had practically committed himself to this new trust. It was agreed that he should receive out of the new loan £37,000 at the opening, and £20,000 more at the conclusion of his work; also that £300,000 should be set apart to provide him with an efficient fleet, whereof six steamers were to be built in England and two frigates in America. He further stipulated that the entire Greek fleet should be placed under his sole command, and that he should have power to undertake such operations as he might choose independently of the Greek Government. These preliminary arrangements settled, Cochrane revisited, for the first time for many years, his beloved native country, and while there was cheered by a popular demonstration which showed the first turn of the tide in his favour at home. As he sat one evening in the theatre at Edinburgh an allusion to South America was introduced into the play, and the audience, taking it up, rose and turned to him with a perfect hurricane of applause. But he had still many a trouble before him.

He had not been in Scotland above two months when he was informed that the contractor charged with the construction of the steamers was making most unsatisfactory progress with the work, and on hurrying up to London to investigate the matter, he was met by a warning that the Government was contemplating his arrest for the part that he had played in South America. Under

the Foreign Enlistment Act his service with the insurgents was an indictable offence; and, looking to the enormous damage that he had inflicted upon Spain and Portugal, England's former allies, it is hardly surprising that the Government should have shrunk from incurring the ill-will of Turkey by permitting him to do the like in Greece. To avoid arrest he left London for Boulogne, and while there, finding himself cut off from all superintendence of the building of his fleet, thought seriously of resigning his command. Most unfortunately he sought advice from Burdett, who, more full of good intentions than good sense, assured him that the liberation of Greece would favour his restoration in England, and urged him strongly to abide by his agreement. After about a month's stay in France, Cochrane learned that there, too, proceedings were pending against him for illegal detention of a French vessel in the Pacific. Nothing but trouble seemed to come out of his magnificent exertions in South America. With a heavy heart he sought a new refuge in Brussels, where he remained perforce inactive for four weary months.

Meanwhile the construction of the steamers progressed more slowly than ever. The fact was that the contractor was in the pay of Ibrahim Pasha, the Commander of the Turkish forces in Greece, and had no intention of doing anything for the Greeks beyond taking a share of the new loan. In America the same rascality was at work over the construction of the two frigates, with the ultimate result that instead of two vessels at the contract price of £157,000, but one was delivered at a cost of £200,000. Such was the fashion in which the Greek

Committee in London managed the affairs of Greece, aided, we should add, by two Greek deputies, who took good care to divert a portion of the loan into their own pockets. These two worthies, seeing that through their own roguery there would soon be little money left for the legitimate objects of the loan, had the assurance to suggest that Cochrane should refund the £37,000 already paid to him, and accept in lieu thereof one of the half-built frigates, acknowledged to be unsaleable, that had been ordered in America. It is distressing to be compelled to add that Cochrane, instead of resigning the command forthwith, answered this cool request with rare patience and generosity, declining, indeed, to comply, but substituting a most handsome offer of his own. As a matter of fact the money had been invested by him in Greek stock, so that practically it was already, if not a vanished, at any rate a vanishing quantity.

At last, towards the close of April, 1826, the first of the new steamers, the *Perseverance*, approached actual completion. So far Cochrane had wisely declined to enter Grecian waters without a sufficient fleet, but, wearied by the long delay, he now consented to start for the Mediterranean independently, leaving Captain Frank Hastings, an English naval officer who had early joined the Greek service, to follow him with the *Perseverance*. After a hurried visit to London to inspect the vessels on the stocks, which he found in a thoroughly unsatisfactory state, he embarked on the 20th of May on board a schooner yacht, the *Unicorn*. For a time he hung about British waters in the hope of receiving at any rate an instalment of his fleet, for the contractor had solemnly bound himself to deliver two of the steamers

within a fortnight, and the remaining three within a month; but he waited in vain. Finally, hearing that Hastings had actually started with the *Perseverance*, he decided, on the 12th of June, to sail for the Mediterranean. Arriving at Messina on the 12th of July, he anchored and waited in daily expectation of the arrival of his fleet. Day followed day, and week succeeded week, but no fleet appeared. At last, after three long months of waiting, of asking for ships and receiving excuses, he moved in despair up to Marseilles and anchored there on the 20th of October. Still the fleet appeared not; the steamers were still incomplete, and the loan was well-nigh exhausted. Fortunately the Philhellenes of Paris and Switzerland came to his rescue and provided him with a small corvette, and with this humble vessel in company he finally set sail in the *Unicorn* on the 23rd of February, 1827, and entered Greek waters on the 17th of March. The American frigate, *Hellas*, which was to be his flagship, had arrived at Ægina before him in the December previous. Thus ominously opened his career in the service of Greece.

Anchoring at Poros on the 19th of March, Cochrane was at once welcomed with compliments, congratulations, and inflated speeches innumerable. The condition of Greece was, in fact, desperate. The last stand of the patriots (one should rather call them insurgents) had been broken down almost a year before, when Missolonghi, after a magnificent defence, had succumbed to the Turks on the 22nd of April, 1826. The Greeks had measured their strength against the invincible will of Sultan Mahmoud, and had been beaten to the ground.

Thrice welcome therefore was the advent of a hero who should achieve the liberation of their country without further trouble to themselves. One of the few true patriots, the gallant sailor Miaoulis, at once placed himself under Cochrane's orders. His heart had been well-nigh broken by the selfishness and insubordination of his fleet; but what he could do he did, and he at least was blameless for the disasters that befell his country. As to the rest of the Greek leaders, they sought no more than to gain Cochrane's favour for their own particular factions. There were at the moment two principal Governments in Greece, one stationed at Hermione, the other at Ægina, both useless and neither patriotic. The faction at Hermione, after holding up to him the enormities of its rival, begged him to come ashore and assist in its debates for the creation of a new Government. Cochrane flashed one scornful glance into the heart of these miserable pedantries, and answered with a bitter reproof. He pointed out that the discussion of constitutional niceties was out of place at a time when the enemy held possession of three-fourths of the country, and recommended a perusal of Demosthenes' First Philippic, with special attention to the following passage: "If you will become your own masters, and cease each of you to expect to do nothing himself while his neighbour does everything for him, you will then with God's permission get back your own, recover what is lost, and punish your enemy." The quotation was happy, but it produced no more effect than a stanza from Dr. Watt's hymns. It is supposed that Cochrane's presence did indeed prevent the Assembly at Hermione from attacking its rival by force

of arms, but for a time it could effect no more. Fortunately an opportunity for dealing more decisively with the contending parties soon presented itself. The Assembly at Ægina sent him his commission as Admiral; he promptly refused to accept it, and intimated that, unless the two parties reconciled their differences at once, he would quit the country on the spot. This threat brought them for a time to their senses. Cochrane was requested to decide the mode for election of a central executive body, and under his direction a National Assembly finally met at Damala on the 7th of April, wherein, after many stormy scenes, Count John Capodistrias was elected President of Greece for seven years. As, however, the new President was unlikely to assume office immediately, the chief power was entrusted for the present to a Commission of three,—a poor substitute, as events were to prove, for a single resolute man.

This done, Cochrane was on the 18th of April sworn in with great ceremony as First Admiral of Greece. He had hoped that the National Assembly would adjourn forthwith and despatch the army to the urgent business of fighting; but that incorrigible body, on the contrary, continued for a full month to discuss constitutional platitudes and pedantries with a zeal and animosity that left no time for action against the Ottoman oppressor. In vain Cochrane told them that what was needed was not sage deliberation on forms of government, but prompt exercise of energetic authority; in vain he issued proclamations denouncing the "brutal Turk," and calling the people to arms. The Greeks were far too well content with words to find leisure for deeds. And

meanwhile the one stronghold left to the patriots, Athens, the centre of all Hellenic sentiment, was hard pressed by the enemy. The siege had begun as far back as June, 1826, but had been raised for a time by Colonel Fabvier, a Frenchman in the Greek service, who in December had forced his way in with a small reinforcement and relieved the garrison. There were now about a thousand soldiers, and four hundred women and children, cooped up by the Turks in the Acropolis, still resisting with determination, but anxiously awaiting further relief. The most effective method of raising the siege was to operate in rear of the besieging force, cut off its supplies from the northward, and so force it to retire; and this was the plan recommended by Cochrane. In pursuance thereof he sent Captain Hastings with a small squadron to the gulf of Volo to capture all Turkish victualling ships that might be lying there. The enterprise was completely successful. Hastings, who in the matter of independence and daring bore a strong resemblance to Cochrane, did his duty gallantly and swiftly, in a fashion to rouse all men of spirit to further exertion. But the Greek leaders would not follow up this success: they would hear of nothing but a direct attack on the besiegers of Athens; and their counsels were strengthened by piteous messages from Fabvier as to the desperate state of the garrison in the Acropolis. Nothing doubting the truth of Fabvier's representations, Cochrane abandoned his own design to second that of the incompetent Greeks. The Greek army, already in position before Athens, consisted of three thousand men under General Gordon at Munychia, and twenty-five hundred under a Greek, Karaiskakes, at Keratsina

on the opposite side of the Piræus; both of which bodies were paralysed by a Turkish garrison stationed midway between the two camps in the monastery of Spiridion. On the 17th of April Cochrane, having hoisted his flag on board the *Hellas*, passed over to the bay of Phalerum, on the east side of Munychia, where he was joined by the newly-appointed Generalissimo, Sir Richard Church, with a force of three thousand men. The united strength of the Greek army before Athens now amounted to about ten thousand men. Among these were one thousand from the island of Hydra, who had been recruited by Cochrane himself for service ashore; a useless and undisciplined corps, but so important in its own eyes as to excite the jealousy of the rest of the troops, which, though less inefficient, were worse paid.

Five days were spent in organising the reinforcement at Phalerum. Meantime the messengers from the Acropolis arrived with the news that the garrison could not hold out for more than five days longer. The first essential operation towards their relief was the capture of the monastery of Spiridion, which, though held by but a weak force of Turks, effectually cut the Greek armies in two. Cochrane tried hard to persuade Karaiskakes to effect a junction with Church and press on to Athens, and, as an alternative, offered to transport the whole force to Cape Colias, from whence it could advance upon the capital by a yet shorter route. Advice and entreaty were alike useless. Karaiskakes had no ideas and no plan, except to entrench his position with the hope of starving out the garrison of the monastery. In despair Cochrane was about

to take strong measures, when mere chance gave him the opportunity of striking a decisive blow. A small party of Greek soldiers was landing under his superintendence, when the Turks, who had been watching them from the monastery, came down to hinder the debarkation. Cochrane called up his Hydriots to reinforce him; the Turks summoned reinforcements likewise, and gradually the engagement became general. Then the magic of Cochrane's leadership showed itself in all its glory. Armed with no more deadly weapon than a telescope he cheered on his men, and the Greeks, catching fire from him, dashed after him into the Turkish entrenchments about the monastery, and captured nine of the enemy's redoubts. Three hundred Turks fled within the monastery for refuge, but the bulk of them retired still farther towards Athens. By this bold assault the stronghold of Spiridion was virtually taken.

Cochrane, true to his principle of pressing every success to the utmost, now urged a sudden, united, and immediate attack on the Turkish camp; but Karaiskakes would not move until the monastery was actually in his hands. Anxious to satisfy this obstinate man, Cochrane bombarded the building from the *Hellas* on the following morning, and soon knocked it into ruins; but Kariskakes would deliver no more three half-hearted assaults, which were easily repulsed by the gallant little Turkish garrison. So the monastery remained still in the hands of the enemy, and Karaiskakes remained motionless before it. Cochrane, fuming over this prolonged inaction, wrote violent letters insisting upon an immediate advance on Athens, but with no better result than to

provoke something painfully like a mutiny among the Greek soldiers. The truth is that the Greeks were beaten. In the first flush of success, and the first revelry of massacre, they had shown some fighting qualities; but now that they were required to stand up and meet their match in a fair field, they would fight no longer. Cochrane and Church, in deep disgust, shook the dust off their feet, and left Karaiskakes to manage the capture of the monastery by himself, which he presently accomplished by granting the garrison a capitulation with all the honours of war. Cochrane, from the deck of his yacht, observed the passage of communications between the Greeks and the garrison, and as he had previously refused to grant the Turks a capitulation, was not a little annoyed. Mr. Finlay, the historian, who was standing by his side, was distracted by other thoughts. "All those men will be murdered," he said, pointing to the garrison. "Do you hear what he says?" asked Cochrane, turning in horror to General Gordon who stood on his other side. "My lord," said Gordon, who always spoke with great deliberation, "I fear it is too true." Finlay and Gordon knew their men too well to be mistaken. The Greeks, finding no plunder in the monastery, turned upon their prisoners, and, in spite of the efforts of Karaiskakes, massacred them there and then. Gordon, who had witnessed similar scenes at Tripolitza, threw up his command after this affair and quitted Greece. It had been better for Cochrane if he had done likewise.

There was now no obstacle to hinder an immediate march on Athens, a course which Cochrane once more advised with vehemence, but without success. On the

4th of May Kariskakes was mortally wounded in a skirmish. He was carried on board ship, whither he sent for Cochrane to thank him, and to entrust him with a last message to his captains, that they should accompany the Admiral to Cape Colias and thence advance on Athens. After some demur it was determined to adopt this plan: the change of base was accomplished without difficulty; but there the operations came to an end, the Greeks refusing to advance, and contenting themselves with throwing up paltry entrenchments. The Turks at once came down against them and defeated them utterly, the cavalry doing frightful execution, and pursuing the fugitives even to the water's edge. Cochrane, who, though not in charge of the movement, had gone ashore to watch it, was carried away in the flight, and with difficulty forced his way through the combatants to the beach, and ultimately, neck-deep in water, to his boat. This defeat was decisive. Three thousand of the Greek army deserted on the spot: General Church abandoned Munychia; and on the 5th of June the garrison of the Acropolis capitulated. In spite of all his complaints Fabvier had still four months' provisions and abundance of ammunition; a fact which is sufficient to condemn both his hasty surrender, and the misrepresentations whereby he had led the Greek generals to a false plan of campaign. The blame of this disaster is commonly ascribed to Cochrane, but the design, as he had conceived it, was sound enough. No plan of operations in the world will win a battle if the soldiers, like the Greeks on this occasion, decline either to march or to fight. The real misfortune was that the execution of the project should have been

so long delayed, owing to false intelligence from the Acropolis. Cochrane's whole career shows that he aspired always to compass the greatest possible results with the least possible sacrifice; and for a beaten force like that of the Greeks no scheme of operations could have been wiser than this, for it would at once have discouraged the enemy and inspirited the men without shedding a drop of blood. But where patriots are fonder of talk than of action, and even in their talk prefer falsehood to truth, there is little hope even for the greatest of leaders.

CHAPTER XII

FURTHER SERVICE IN GREECE

1827–1828

COCHRANE now turned to his more legitimate function, the organisation of the Greek Navy. As a preliminary step the whole fleet was assembled and reviewed by him at Poros, the vessels from Hydra and Spetzas, which were supposed to be its backbone, being already anchored in the port. The crews of these ships on being ordered to get them under way sent a deputation to Cochrane to demand a month's pay in advance, pointing out that he had received on board his yacht the necessary funds for the purpose. Cochrane replied that he had already spent so much in the futile operations for the relief of Athens that he could offer for the present no more than a fortnight's wages in advance. The patriotic seamen rejected this proposal with indignation. "In vain," says Finlay, "the Grand Admiral urged the duty they owed to their country. No seaman could trust his country for a fortnight's wages." Without waiting for orders, the Hydriots and Spetziots weighed anchor and deserted on the spot, brig after brig passing with utter shamelessness under the stern of the flagship, where the Admiral in his cabin sat silently watching the whole scene. By sunset

the Greek fleet had dispersed itself for the congenial occupations of privateering and piracy, leaving Cochrane in the flagship to take care of himself. "Liberator of Greece—what a glorious title!"

It was useless to look to the Greek Government for help in such difficulties. With its wonted readiness the executive had given him full authority to purchase ships and stores, and to engage labourers and seamen as he might think best; but it had carefully omitted to furnish him with the requisite funds. He was, indeed, empowered to borrow money on the security of the Government, but Greek credit was by this time hopelessly exhausted. He was therefore compelled to cruise among the islands, and raise money and recruits as best he could. It was no easy task; not a man would join the fleet without a month's pay in advance, and not one would stay beyond the term of his month, so that the labour of making a disciplined crew was interminable. On the 22nd of May he tested his ship's company of the *Hellas* by the chase of a couple of Turkish frigates; but the firing was so wild, and the confusion generally so great, that he was unwilling to repeat the experiment. Unable to take his frigate into port lest the crew, according to custom, should desert in a body, he contented himself with surveying the coast and examining the harbours. Meanwhile all applications to the Government for money and stores for the fleet were met by an order to lose no time in securing the independence of Greece.

Having seen the hopelessness of any attempt to act in combination with the Greek army, he resolved to carry the war into the enemy's country. He had been

called to the Greek, as to the South American, command in order to close the sea to the passage of reinforcements from the sovereign State; and he now determined to make a bold stroke for the capture of Alexandria, where a large force was preparing to embark for further operations against the Greeks. Thither, accordingly, he sailed on the 11th of June with the *Hellas*, flagship, the French corvette *Sauveur*, fourteen Greek brigs, and eight fire-ships. On the 15th he came in sight of the harbour, spent the day in preparing an explosion-vessel, and on the morrow, hoisting American colours, stood in with the whole fleet for the attack. With great difficulty the Greek vessels were induced to follow the flagship to the entrance to the port; but once there, at the sight of twenty Egyptian ships, the seamen lost heart altogether. After infinite persuasion, Kanares, who was really a gallant man, coaxed the crews of two of the fire-ships into action, and succeeded in burning one Egyptian man-of-war. But when the Egyptians, in great trepidation, weighed anchor for immediate flight, the Greeks, concluding that they were coming out to attack, went about headlong. Cochrane would gladly have engaged the enemy single-handed as at Bahia, if he could have depended on his crew; but the seamen of the flagship were as cowardly as the rest. There was nothing for it but to rally his scattered fleet, and this having been with some difficulty accomplished, he took it to the coast of Asia Minor for stores and water. Meanwhile he wrote a letter to Mohammed Ali, warning him that he would yet infallibly destroy the expedition preparing against Greece. The old Pasha was not likely to take notice of such

a message; and the less so, as Cochrane a year before had hurled another letter at him, pelting him with quotations from the Hebrew prophets, and denouncing him with marvellous impudence for his iniquity in employing foreign officers in his service. It is probable that Mohammed Ali put him down for a madman; and indeed we must hope, for Cochrane's sake, that he did, for these too boastful threats were never fulfilled. The Admiral was capable enough, but the Greek seamen were utterly worthless. It is recorded that Cochrane, in order to gain their confidence and good-will, beguiled the tedious hours on board ship by exhibiting to his crew a magic lantern. The men enjoyed it with childish delight, until, unfortunately, he displayed a slide which represented a Greek flying from a Turk and finally melted into a view of the Turk cutting off the Greek's head. The sight was too much for the sailors. Every man on board took fright; some jumped into the sea, some took refuge in the hold; nor was it possible for several hours to get them together again.

From Asia Minor Cochrane returned to Nauplia at the urgent bidding of the Governing Commission. It was the old story; one worthless Greek faction seeking his assistance for the suppression of its equally worthless rivals. Cochrane would not wait to see the issue of the struggle, but sailed to Navarino, where the whole Turkish fleet had been concentrated. Here, for the first time, he succeeded in making the Greek sailors fight. On the 1st of August five small vessels were detached from the main Turkish force, and gave the *Hellas* an opportunity for pursuit. After a chase of nearly

twenty-four hours, she closed with the largest, a corvette of twenty-eight guns, and brought her to action. "The boys on board the flagship," wrote Cochrane, "behaved pretty well; but the oldest, ugliest, and fiercest-looking bravoes ran to the other side of the deck, roaring like market-bulls." This would not do; down went the Admiral in all his wrath among the bravoes, and knocked them about with his fists right and left. Eventually, after fifty minutes' fight, the corvette was taken; a poor victory for a sixty-four-gun frigate to the old captain of the *Speedy* and the *Pallas*.

It would be both tedious and unprofitable to follow Cochrane through his weary wrestling with the corruption of the Greek Government and the lawlessness of the Greek seamen. Such was the insubordination and treachery even of his own crew, that he was compelled always to carry a loaded pistol in his pocket. Further operations were at length stopped by the intervention of the French and English fleets; and finally, on the 20th of October, France, England, and Russia took matters into their own hands and crushed the Turkish fleet in the action of Navarino. He then betook himself to the suppression of piracy on the Greek coasts, being painfully conscious the while that the greater part of his own fleet was composed of pirates and encouraged as such by the Greek Government. In fact, the Admirals of the Allied Powers made no secret of their intention to treat Greek war-vessels as pirates; an announcement which cut Cochrane to the quick. Utterly disgusted with the whole service, he suddenly made up his mind to return to England, in order to lay the whole state of affairs before the Philhellenes in

London, and devise some measures for remedying it. It was the story of Brazil over again; after breathing the foul air of patriotic rascality, the man pined for the purer atmosphere of his native land.

Arriving in London on the 19th of February, 1828, he found that the enthusiasm for the Greek cause was cooled, and that the Government was in no mood to permit the enlistment of British seamen for the Greek service. He discovered, further, that the steamers under construction by the rogue of a contractor were, after two years' delay, still unfinished. England being unsympathetic, he journeyed on to Paris to see what might be done there. Shortly after his departure he heard that Count John Capodistrias, who had been elected President of Greece in the previous year, had at last assumed the duties of his office. This was good news; for Capodistrias was a man on whom he counted for active and loyal support. Cochrane's zeal was, however, somewhat damped by the receipt of a letter from one of the Greek deputies in London, demanding refund of the £37,000 which had been made over to him on his acceptance of the Greek command, on the ground that he had forfeited it by his departure from Greek waters. Here was a repetition of the wrangles which had so unhappily closed his connection with Brazil. He returned an indignant refusal, which was probably quite thrown away on the peculating deputy, and went his own way. Finally, after much travelling to and fro between London and Paris, in the effort to bolster up the deservedly discredited cause of Greece, he started in one of the new steamers, the *Mercury*, on his return to the Ægean.

On arriving at Poros on the 30th of September he

found that the rule of Capodistrias had already wrought improvement, and also that the French had driven all the Turkish and Egyptian forces out of the Morea. In effect Greece was free; the French had freed it, and a liberator was no longer required. He was received by the Greek authorities with studied disrespect. Even the President, who owed his election to Cochrane, repeatedly refused to see him, and only consented to an interview in order to challenge the accuracy of his accounts. It is curious to note the jealousy of oppressed nationalities for every one's honesty but their own. Finally, however, the correctness of his accounts was grudgingly acknowledged, and Cochrane thereupon resigned his commission, renouncing at the same time his share of the two solitary prizes that he had taken during the war, and all claim to the £20,000 still due to him according to the original agreement. The President acknowledged his generosity in a grateful letter, and observed that Greece was in the hands of God and of the Allied Powers. It was, however, still in the hands of rogues and thieves. The next news that Cochrane heard was that the Greek Government contemplated the repudiation of the loan of 1825, a calamity which the English contractors entreated him to avert. The subsequent history of Greek finance does not lessen our surprise in learning that his intervention was successful.

Having made over the *Mercury* to the Government, Cochrane requested a passage homeward in some other Greek vessel. Very reluctantly the Government provided him with a miserable brig, without provisions or decent accommodation, and commanded by a ruffian who had distinguished himself by insubordination at Alex-

andria, and who now took every opportunity of insulting his former Admiral. There was a stormy scene between Cochrane and the President; but meanwhile the Russian Admiral, Heyden, had generously offered a passage to Malta in one of his own ships, and that with all the courtesy that a sailor could show to a king of his profession. "I beg," he wrote, "that Lord Cochrane will send back to their kennels the miserable causes of his annoyance and proceed to Malta, or to Zante if he wishes, in one of my corvettes, taking with him as large a suite as he likes. It cannot be too numerous. As regards his salute, I will receive him with the honours due to his rank, and with musical honours, and at his departure I will man yards." So in a Russian corvette he sailed for Malta on the 20th of December, 1828, and on landing was welcomed by the Admiral, Sir Pulteney Malcolm, who as a captain had shared in the attack in Aix Roads, and had given evidence in his favour at the court-martial. From Malta he returned by a tedious journey to Paris; and thus, at the age of fifty-four, the great seaman closed his fighting career. "Thank God," he wrote to a friend "we are clear of a country where there is no hope of amelioration for half a century to come."

That half-century is now nearly twenty years past, and the condition of Greece is still a disappointment to those who wish the country well. It is distressing to think that so great a sailor as Cochrane should have wasted four years of his life, and, so far as was possible, tarnished his fame in the service of such a gang as the Greek leaders. He had done much with the Chilians, who remain something of a naval nation to this day:

he had even made something of that unpromising race the Brazilians; but with the Greeks he could do absolutely nothing. They would not learn of him, they would not follow him, they would not fight under him. They imagined that his mere presence would deliver them from their enemies, and leave them free to devote themselves to their favourite avocations,—the politicians to faction, the soldiers to brigandage, and the seamen to piracy. On the behaviour of the Greek leaders towards him it is unnecessary to comment; it is sufficient to say (and it is saying a good deal) that they treated him, on the whole, worse than any of his masters. As a matter of fact even the ancient Greeks had no proper appreciation of a great sailor. The Athenians at the opening of the Peloponnesian War possessed the greatest admiral of antiquity, a man with a spice of Cochrane in his composition, that Phormio, namely, who off Naupactus rowed round and round the Lacedemonian fleet till he had scared it into the requisite confusion, and then attacked and dispersed it. Thucydides does indeed record this brilliant action, but, though himself a naval commander, he suffers Phormio to drop out of his history unnoticed. It were devoutly to be wished that Cochrane's connection with Greece could be likewise forgotten; though the reproach is not his when history records that he could make any seamen fight except the Greek.

CHAPTER XIII

RETURN TO ENGLAND—RESTORATION TO RANK—DEATH

1829–1860

On his return from Greece Cochrane took up his residence for six months in Paris, and made no attempt to approach England until September, 1829. During his flying visit to London in the previous year he had made petition to the Duke of Clarence, at that time Lord High Admiral, for reconsideration of his case, but, owing to the hostility of the Ministry, without success. Nor was it until after the Duke had ascended the throne as King William the Fourth, and Wellington's Administration had fallen in December, 1830, that he renewed his efforts to obtain justice. The new Ministers one and all received his memorials with favour, but they did nothing for him. Any hopes that he might have cherished of urging his grievances in Parliament were defeated by the death of his father in 1831, which gave him the unpleasant position, politically speaking, of a Scotch peer, and changed his name from Cochrane, under which he had become famous throughout the world, to Dundonald. He had, however, a good friend in the Sailor-King. Lady Dundonald worked with unwearied devotion for her husband's restoration, interceding alike with the Sovereign

and his Ministers. Cochrane himself was permitted to advocate his cause in a personal interview with the King; and ultimately, in February, 1832, he obtained the promise of a free pardon. The final act was consummated at a Privy Council held on the 2nd of May. He was on that day restored to his rank in the Royal Navy, and a few days later gazetted a Rear-Admiral of the Fleet. Thus, after sixteen years' of bitter penance, the first instalment of reparation was paid to him. He still chafed at the phrase "free pardon," as connoting the pre-existence of guilt; but the weary period of suffering and of exile was past, and the rest of his life was to be cheered by token after token of his country's amends for the wrong that she had done to him.

Unable to find immediate employment at sea, Dundonald threw the whole of his energy into his hereditary resource of invention. With the swift and comprehensive glance of genius he saw that the days of sailing-vessels were numbered, and sought, by improvement of the newly-invented steam-engine, to keep the British navy in its place at the head of all navies. He busied himself alike with the simplification of machinery, with the improvement of boilers, with new designs for screw-propellers, with scientific examination of the best lines for ship-building, and, in fact, with every detail in the construction of steam-vessels. Eventually, after overcoming the difficulties that beset all inventors, he persuaded the Admiralty to build a steam-frigate in accordance with his designs, the construction and trial of which occupied most of his time during the years 1843 and 1844. The *Janus*, however, from some mistake in the calculations, or from some other cause,

was found ultimately to be a failure. Details of Cochrane's principles would be out of place in a work of this kind; it must suffice that his inventions, like those of his father, were of the class that smooth the road for others rather than land their author at the goal. His bones help to fill many a trench over which men pass to the siege of the fortress of science.

Concurrently with these labours he continued to press upon the Admiralty the secret war-plans which he had discovered while yet a captain, and carefully kept close during his service under foreign flags. In 1846 these plans were formally submitted to a Board of Experts, composed of the Surveyor-General of the Ordnance, Sir John Burgoyne, and Lieutenant-Colonel Colquhoun, which decided that two out of three of them were at variance with the principles of civilised warfare, and must therefore still be kept secret. In these days of repeating rifles, melinite, and other agents of wholesale destruction, the objections must be well-nigh obsolete. But it is less for the purpose of introducing abstruse questions of this kind than of displaying the amazing activity of the man's mind, that this subject, with which we have even now not quite done, is here mentioned.

Meanwhile the work of reparation for past wrongs was progressing apace. In 1841 an ordinary good-service pension was allotted to him. On the Queen's birthday, 1847, the Grand Cross of the Bath, for the restitution whereof he had long begged as essential to his reinstatement, was granted to him by Her Majesty; and the compliment was enhanced by Prince Albert who, cutting short all formalities, sent him

the insignia at once, in order that he might wear them at the birthday drawing-room on the 27th of May. This was a peculiarly graceful act, for it enabled Dundonald to take his place among the great warriors of his country as a veteran knight of 1809. In July he was duly installed at a Chapter of the Order. Lord Ellenborough, an evil name to him in former days, was among his sponsors, and the Duke of Wellington, whose Ministry had rejected his petition for reinstatement in 1828, shook hands with him and offered his congratulations. This, so far as we know, was the first meeting of these two men, who had at least so much in common, that each stood at the head of his profession in the civilised world. In other respects they were far as the poles asunder. Wellington would do violence to his own opinions that the Sovereign's Government might be carried on; Dundonald would sacrifice his own future merely to injure the Government. Wellington stayed and fought against difficulties, while his officers went home to abuse him in Parliament; Dundonald, skilled beyond all men in turning aside the obstacles of war, went home on purpose to attack his superiors in the House of Commons. In genius for actual warfare there was little to choose between them, though Wellington had not the personal magnetism of Dundonald. The great Admiral had declared that it was impossible for the British army to drive the French out of the Peninsula, but the great General had done it. On the other hand, the Admiral had undertaken to do the work as effectually with five frigates, and it is hard to say that he would not have done it. But the essential difference between them was

that the one was a disciplined, and the other an undisciplined man; and Wellington, as, in spite of his admiration for Charles Napier, he significantly showed, did not love undisciplined men. Nevertheless, the two men met, each with a cordial admiration for the other; for genius alone can truly appreciate genius, and Wellington and Dundonald could each understand better than other men the difficulties which the other had overcome.

At the end of 1847 Dundonald obtained, but, alas, only in time of peace, the highest object of his ambition, —the command of a British fleet at sea—and hoisted his flag as Commander-in-Chief on the North American and West Indian Station. The terms in which this appointment was offered to him, and the congratulations that followed his acceptance of it, were such as to convince him of the general desire to atone for wrongs done to him in the past. He took over the command with deep gratitude, and sailed for Halifax on the 28th of March, 1848. No incident of importance broke the even course of his duties on the Station, but the mere traversing of the region placed under his control supplied occupation in abundance for so busy a mind. In visiting Bermuda the geological formation of the Archipelago interests him little less than the defence of the Station. At Barbados, the little island immortalised by his former midshipman Marryat, he condemns the situation of the barracks and rejoices in the prosperity of the negroes. In Newfoundland he is distracted between the decline of the fisheries and the stratification of the rocks. At Trinidad he deplores the inefficiency of the government, and grows rapturous over the pitch-lake. He looks

with a seeing eye into all evils and abuses, traces them to their source, and devises their remedy; for he is ready and anxious as ever to set the whole world right, and has not lost faith in the efficacy of human effort. His views, again, are by this time widened, and, in spite of his enthusiasm for liberty, he is not blind to the patent fact that the emancipation of the slaves was a measure no less disastrous than heroic, and meant ruin if not death to the West Indies.

Returning to England at the expiration of his term of command in 1851, he plunged with unabated activity, though now in his seventy-sixth year, into new fields of invention. His improved boilers had been largely adopted in the navy during his absence, so that he could enjoy the satisfaction of seeing the fruit of former labours; but he was not a man who could live on past success. He came home possessed of a passion to utilise the bitumen lying idle in the lake at Trinidad, and devoted much time in the next two years to study of the subject. His researches issued in the taking out of five different patents, and in a skeleton scheme for the embankment of the Thames, wherein bituminous concrete was to be largely employed. Then came the Crimean War, and with it a revival of hope for his secret war-plans. By July, 1854, he had submitted to the Government a finished scheme for the destruction of Cronstadt, and begged that it might be put into execution. The design was examined by a Committee of Experts and rejected, nominally on the ground that such experiments were in the circumstances undesirable. "My dear Sir James," wrote Dundonald, then in his eightieth year, to the first Lord of the Admiralty, "were it necessary,

which it is not, that I should place myself in an arm-chair on the poop, with each leg on a cushion, I would undertake to subdue every insular fortification at Cronstadt within four hours of the commencement of the attack." In the following January, on the removal of Sir Charles Napier from the command of the Baltic fleet, he volunteered his services in Napier's place; and the offer being with all courtesy refused, he proceeded to press his plans upon public notice by petition to the House of Commons, and by letters to *The Times*. After much hesitation Lord Palmerston consented to give the scheme a trial on a small scale at Sebastopol, but, being unable to agree with the conditions proposed by Dundonald, suffered the project to fall to the ground. Meanwhile a section of the public proposed that Lord Dundonald should execute his great design independently of the Government, and promised subscriptions to defray the necessary cost. The suggestion was of course impracticable, but it affords a curious proof of the faith reposed in the indomitable old man.

There remains little more to be recorded. In his appointment as Rear-Admiral of the United Kingdom and as an Elder Brother of the Trinity House, two more graceful compliments were offered to him, and accepted with deep and genuine gratitude; the former with a characteristic hope that the distinction might not disqualify him for further active service. There remained, however, still three objects on which his heart was set for the total obliteration of his former disgrace. These were the replacement of his banner in Henry the Seventh's Chapel, the repayment of the fine paid under the sentence in the Stock Exchange trial,

and the restoration of the half-pay suspended during his temporary removal from the navy. All three were refused by Lord Palmerston, the first as being none of his business, the two last as unprecedented. Thereupon Dundonald, undefeated at eighty-three as at twenty-three, determined to appeal from the Minister to the nation, and during 1858, 1859, and 1860, wrote the story of his naval services in Chili, Peru, and Brazil, and the *Autobiography of a Seaman*. There is little sign of senility in either of these works, though in the controversial portions there is some repetition, the narrative being for the most part clear, straightforward, and spirited enough. The old warrior's body was worn out, and he wrote under stress of intense physical pain; but the will was as imperious, the pugnacity as untameable, the indignation as fierce, and the bitterness of past enmity, alas, as keen as ever. Thus, breaking to the last in fitful gusts, the storm of the man's life blew itself out. Almost to the end he promised himself a few last peaceful years in Scotland, and wrote his hopes to his friend Professor, now Lord, Playfair, in Edinburgh, on the 25th of October, 1860. On the 30th he underwent an operation from which he never rallied, and at the dawn of the 31st he died.

He had in his last moments expressed a wish that his body might rest in Westminster Abbey, and in the Abbey on the 14th of November he was laid. On the day before the funeral his banner, by the personal intervention of the Queen and Prince Albert, was restored to its place in Henry the Seventh's Chapel, and thus, with the glad knowledge that the dearest wish of his heart had been fulfilled, his friends laid him down to rest. On

either hand of the coffin were Admiral Sir George Seymour, Admiral Grenfell of the Brazilian Navy, Captains Goldsmith, Schomberg, Hay, and Nolloth; the first the same Seymour who had stood by him in the *Kingfisher* and *Pallas* in Aix Roads, the second the brilliant officer who had shared in the capture of the *Esmeralda* and received the surrender of Para. Lord Brougham, his old friend and political ally, hurried home from Cannes to be present at the last ceremony in the Abbey. "What," he exclaimed, as he stood by the grave, "no Cabinet Minister here, no officer of State to grace this great man's funeral!" No, not one, and better so, for this was no public funeral, and a great seaman is most fittingly honoured by seamen. He lies in the centre of the nave, about midway between the organ and the west door, where a plain white slab records his daring and his chivalry. At the four corners of the stone are the arms of Chili, Peru, Brazil, and Greece, with the words, *Independencia*, *Libramento*, and Ἀρχιναύαρχος; and looking up from the inscription one meets the full blaze of the west window, and instinctively recalls the breach in the castle of Rosas.

Not until fifteen years were past did the Government of Brazil discharge its obligations to his representatives; and not till two years later even than Brazil did the British Government restore the pay suspended during his long disgrace. Thus tardily was justice done to the memory of Dundonald.

CHAPTER XIV

CHARACTER

In reviewing the story of this extraordinary life one is painfully struck by the nearness of its kinship to a story of failure. Here was a man endowed with a combination of mental and physical gifts such as is allotted to few. A giant in strength and stature he would have gained the name of a great warrior even in the rudest times; but far beyond this, he possessed abnormal energy of disposition, marvellous fertility of resource, and a genius for naval warfare that was positively unique. Even this again was but a part of the man. There remains still the passion for scientific experiment and research that he had inherited from his father. Even if he had never entered the navy, his successes in the domain of science would suffice to give him, smaller perhaps, but yet enduring fame. To this day, when certain discoveries or inventions are trumpeted forth as new, some student calls attention to the fact that they are as old as the great Dundonald. M. Turpin announces a new war-material, a liquid gas; scientific men reply that it is practically identical with Dundonald's. Some modern name is glorified for the conquest of difficulties in the employment of compressed air; again scientific

historians claim the glory for Dundonald. Passing next to the department of mechanical engineering we find that the first steamer which crossed the Atlantic was built in 1818 under his direction; and we have already seen that he was among the first to effect improvements (which were soon further improved upon by others) in the construction of locomotive steam-engines. In fact, it may be said that in his time he could design a ship on improved lines, plan her engines on improved principles, fit her with an improved propeller, and light her with improved lamps. On taking her to sea he could instruct every man on board in every detail of seamanship, artificers' work, and gunnery, map out a plan of operations of unmatched boldness and originality, and execute it with a resource, coolness, and daring, that were little short of miraculous. Lastly, while maintaining always the strictest discipline, he could command the adoration of his men, alike by his sympathy, his care, and the magic of his personality; though had force been necessary, he could have wrung the life out of any one of them by sheer muscular strength.

And yet with all this astonishing power, never was life more nearly wrecked. Like his own flagship he did indeed, so to speak, keep the sea unconquered and defiant, but for years almost in a sinking state. Genius indeed is like fire, a good servant, but a bad master; and it is only when held in discipline and subjection, that it finds its highest manifestation in the perfect sanity and self-restraint of a Cæsar, a Shakespeare, or a Bacon. Dundonald was possessed by his genius, saturated with the sense of his superiority, impatient

of all control, sadly lacking in that kindly tolerance of human stupidity, whereof the essence is a keen enjoyment of the ridiculous. Hence the keynote of his character, as of nearly every genius that falls little short of the highest, was a passionate, though unconscious, egotism. The note was enriched to noble harmony by many a fine ambition, many a lofty ideal, many a generous enthusiasm; but the sound is too often that of an ill-balanced organ, the manuals brilliant without repose, and overweighted by the pedals of self. Another and no less striking characteristic was his restless and insatiable energy. Never was man more emphatically a man of action. Action was the breath of his nostrils. Give him an enemy to overcome, and he was in his element; force him to concentrate his whole activity on that enemy, and he was safe. But this matter of concentration was precisely the difficulty; one enemy at a time was never sufficient for him, and he would not be forced. One can trace through the whole of his career the instincts inherited from his father the inventor; feverish haste to vanquish a difficulty, and intense application for a time to the problem in hand; next a rush to the patent-office to record a victory for the benefit of mankind and for the security of his own fame, and then away to the conquest of new difficulties. At every step of his advance Dundonald, like every other man, was dogged and encumbered by human stupidity, and he was continually halting and turning aside to chastise this insuperable foe, against whom the gods themselves fight in vain. For though the strongholds of stupidity may be masked, they cannot be stormed; while if attacked, they can always rally the forces of

rascality to their defence. This was more than Dundonald could comprehend; nor did he recognise that his own failure to understand stupidity was as inexcusable as stupidity's failure to understand him. The result was that his life was made up of a series of quarrels. At every turn new enemies, many if not most of them of his own making, rose up against him; and an enemy to Dundonald was something not to be conciliated, but to be fought. To his combative nature, rejoicing in its strength, a new enemy can hardly be said to have been unwelcome, and the newest was always that which demanded most immediate attention. Hence, when he fell under the cruel stroke of the Stock Exchange trial, he found himself helpless amid the legions of foes who hurried from every side to trample on him.

And yet let us not mistake the man. There were few, indeed hardly any, of his innumerable quarrels wherein he was not primarily in the right, and did not well to be angry. The abuses in the navy, the corruption at the Admiralty, the favouritism, the jobbery, the peculation, and the flat imbecility that were rampant in every administrative department were sufficient to kindle a less inflammable nature than Dundonald's. There was then, as always, much that required to be set right, many a false idol that waited to be overthrown, many a wrong that called for redress. Dundonald could not behold injustice, or even mismanagement, without striving to remedy it on the spot. It mattered little to him whether the matter immediately concerned him or not. He had never pondered over the thought that justice consists in everybody minding their

own business. If injustice were there, that sufficed him; he rose up in his wrath and attacked it, never pausing to ask whether the time were propitious, the ground well chosen, the chances of success in his favour. It was brimful of good intent, it was generous, it was chivalrous, but it was not wise. He would never have made such a mistake in war; and yet an injustice or an abuse, like any other enemy, is strengthened rather than weakened by an untimely and abortive attack. His efficiency as a knight-errant was further impaired by an unfortunate readiness to convert the championship of a cause into a personal enmity. An honourable conflict against the Admiralty's corruption becomes a duel first with St. Vincent and then with Croker; the struggle for justice over the Stock Exchange trial a personal attack on Lord Ellenborough; the assertion of rightful claims in Chili and Peru a direct encounter with San Martin. Controversy on such terms is inevitably marred by loss of dignity, and dignity Dundonald was only too apt to sacrifice for the sake of a momentary advantage. The pranks and shifts that delight us in the study of his wars are not equally attractive under the cold light of civil life.

It is now not difficult to understand that his own account of himself is a story of grievances. That he was shamefully treated on many occasions by men of every nation which he served is undoubtedly true, and that he suffered from none more than from his own countrymen must be sorrowfully confessed. But it is not just to charge England with the whole of the blame. Dundonald made no unpromising entry into the navy; he rose rapidly in rank even before he had an oppor-

tunity of distinguishing himself, and stood as well in St. Vincent's favour as in Lord Keith's, until he chose to run foul of the former. Though neglected for some time after in consequence, he soon received another chance under Collingwood, and fairly had the ball at his foot after Aix Roads. His own account of his troubles is that they arose from personal spite against himself; but, while fully admitting that spite may have to some extent dictated the attitude of the Admiralty towards him, we must surely allow that the Board might with perfect right set its face on principle against all insubordinate officers, and against himself among them. Moreover, as we have hinted before, he was not the only officer of distinction who suffered from the injustice and disfavour of the Admiralty. Noble old Collingwood had but too good cause for complaint, but he bore neglect and slight with gentle humour and dignified patience. It was not that he lacked spirit, for he had refused the medal for St. Vincent unless that for the 1st of June were also awarded to him, and had even rebuked his Admiral on occasion; but he was satisfied with the consciousness that he had done his duty, and asked no more than to continue to do it without reward. Perhaps nothing could better show the contrast between the two men than the advice which each gives to young officers. Let us first take Dundonald's: "If you have in the exercise of your profession acquired a right which is wrongfully withheld, demand it, stick to it with unshaken pertinacity; none but a corrupt body can possibly think the worse of you for it; even though you may be treated like myself, you are doing your country good service by exposing

favouritism, which is only another term for corruption." And now let us hear Collingwood: "You may depend on it that it is more in your power than in any one else's to promote both your comfort and advancement. A strict and unwearied attention to your duty, and a complaisant, respectful behaviour, not only to your superiors but to everybody, will ensure you their regard; and the reward will surely come, and I hope soon, in the way of preferment, but if it should not, I am sure you have too much good sense to let disappointment sour you. Guard carefully against letting discontent appear in you; it is a sorrow to your friends, a triumph to your competitors, and cannot be productive of any good. Conduct yourself so as to deserve the best that can come to you, and the consciousness of your own proper behaviour will keep you in spirits if it does not come."

Such are the voices of two of the greatest seamen that England ever produced, both of them officers of consummate skill and dauntless bravery, both strict disciplinarians in command, and both beloved by their men. The contrast is strange; but can any one doubt which of the two counsels is the better for the conduct of the officer and the efficiency of the fleet? What is a "right," and who is to judge if it be "wrongfully withheld"? Military discipline, like all other human institutions, is, of course, imperfect, a mere compromise consecrated by human experience; but the whole principle whereon it rests is this, that it is better, on the whole, for fighting men that injustice should be done than that an order should be disobeyed. This is the condition which every soldier and sailor accepts on

taking service under the Sovereign. Collingwood, who knew and understood it, put duty first and trusted that justice might follow; Dundonald, who either misunderstood or neglected it, sought justice first, and then returned to duty. His teaching, and indeed his practice, strikes at the root of all discipline.

One could wish that Dundonald, deprived as he had been of the advantages of a public school, could have been brought more directly under Collingwood's influence, that he could have learned from him the "good sense" which disarms disappointment of its bitterness, and hides discontent alike from the sorrow of friends and the triumph of competitors. Indiscipline is the failing which accounts for his misfortunes, far more than the lack of worldly wisdom which is advanced by his biographers. Worldly wisdom is a phrase which rather unjustly bears a sinister meaning; it is held to connote something of the cynic, something of the time-server, something of the hypocrite, to be, in fact, an endowment foreign to the very highest natures. In reality it is simply the faculty of choosing the right moment and avoiding the wrong. Construed in either sense the quality is one which, apart from the operations of war, Dundonald, whether to his credit or his blame, did not possess, though it is not therefore a safe inference to conclude that his character was one of guileless simplicity. There is in his dealings with men a strange blending of the shrewdest scepticism with the blindest faith. Thus in his treatment of the electors of Honiton he first outwits them by counting on their greed, and then suffers them to outwit him by forgetting it. So, too, in the matter of Lord Gambier's trial he is adroit

enough to shirk immediate conflict with his superiors in the navy by shifting his battle-ground to the House of Commons, but overlooks the obvious objection that Gambier, by demanding a court-martial, can compel him to fight at a disadvantage on the very ground that he has tried to avoid. Such tactics cannot be called wholly guileless; and the simplicity that we meet with in him in other relations is, in fact, chiefly the sanguine simplicity of the enthusiast. This is the side of him that confronts us when we look at him as a politician, whether at home as member for Westminster, or abroad as a liberator of oppressed nationalities. He was a *true* child of the Revolution, the great movement that had found action to pull down the old order, but phrases only to construct the new. He had seen, too, the rise of a mighty genius, a consummate master alike of words and deeds, who, marching first at the head of the forces of liberty, seemed to many to be the man who was to set the whole world right. It is remarkable to note the intense fascination exerted by Napoleon's character over brilliant but undisciplined minds. The Napiers, Charles even more than William, worshipped him not only as a great captain, but as a spotless hero. Dundonald too seems, though there is no direct evidence to prove it, to have fallen under the same spell. He, too, was a great leader of men, not only in war but in peace, and fully conscious of his power. His constituents of Westminster recognised him as such, and stood by him with unshaken loyalty to the end, paying his fines, defending his rights, turning his disgrace into a triumph. In Chili the mass of the people worshipped him and still worship his memory to this day, and in

Brazil it was the same; even in Spain during the Peninsular War the inhabitants, against whom he had long done his worst, turned joyfully to his leadership. He felt his power, and he loved to feel it, and to remember that he had felt it. He carefully reprints his manifestos and proclamations alike to Englishmen and to foreigners with evident pride and satisfaction, as if, though perhaps unconsciously, to challenge comparison with the famous bulletins. At one moment, when he finds the destiny of Brazil in his hands, the masterful spirit peeps out: he advises the forcible dissolution of the Assembly with the readiness of Napoleon himself; but immediately after, unlike the cold-blooded Corsican, he reverts to the faith of enthusiasm, and resubmits himself to the bondage of a phrase,—"Give the people a constitution, and all will be well." So again in the Northern Provinces he says to the people, "I give you the liberty for which you pined. Take it, use it, be happy, and grow great." And the people thank him kindly, but return to their former ways and abide therein. "My lord," said the English shipbuilder to Dundonald's father, when the latter brought him the invention that was to save ships' bottoms from the ravages of the worm, "the worm is our best friend." The answer is in substance that which Dundonald, the son, received all over the world. It is a tragical story enough.

Nevertheless, there was also in Dundonald the pure simplicity of a high-minded man. We can trace it to some extent in his relations with foreign nations, and still more in the course of his individual friendships. Nothing but genuine simplicity could have drawn him

into friendship with Croker, who afterwards became his bitterest, and, by abuse of his confidence, his most dangerous enemy. Burdett and Brougham, again, are hardly the men that any but a thoroughly confiding nature would have chosen for intimates and counsellors; the one a dreamer who did not know his own mind, the other a man whom nobody would trust, and both consumed with vanity. Still, to their honour, these two stood by him to the very end, and they were right, for he was a good and chivalrous friend, incapable of disloyalty or ingratitude. Perhaps there is nothing finer in Dundonald's private life than his sacred respect for the memory of his father. Crotchety and eccentric from the first that we see of him, the old Earl in his later life became afflicted with strange fancies, whereof one was that he had been shamefully ill-treated by his son. So loudly and openly did he complain of these imaginary injuries, that Cochrane was compelled to contradict his statements by advertisement in the newspapers. Painful as such a misfortune must have been, it was rendered doubly so by the fact that it came upon him just at the time when he was already overburdened by the disaster of the Stock Exchange trial. Nor can it have failed to do him serious mischief, for his denials doubtless failed to reach many who gave credence to his father's reports, and rumours thus set afloat do not easily perish. Nevertheless, Dundonald breathes no word nor hint of the matter, but seeks rather to enlist our sympathy for the father who first and last caused him, quite innocently, sad trouble. We, too, should respect his silence did we not wish to show that, with all his natural pugnacity, the man could show a grand

and noble patience. Not less touching is the deep devotion and gratitude with which he speaks of his wife, the beautiful and heroic woman who shared all his misfortunes with indomitable spirit, and passed through hardships and dangers, even to peril of assassination, which many a man might be proud to have undergone. He relates with just pride how that he was once obliged to take the Chilian flagship into action when she was aboard. A Chilian sailor seeing her near him hesitated to fire his gun, whereupon she seized his arm, and, directing the match, fired it herself. Never had brave man a braver woman to wife.

But when all is said and done, it is not as a reformer, not as a liberator, not as an inventor, that Dundonald will live longest, but as a great naval genius. It was with truer self-knowledge than is common with him that he called the story of his life the *Autobiography of a Seaman,* for it is as a seaman that he made good his title to fame. Following the history of his naval services from the unequal duel with the *Gamo* to the expulsion of the Portuguese fleet and army from Bahia, one is fairly bewildered as to which of many exploits to select as the most brilliant. In all we find the same salient features: a contest seemingly against overwhelming odds; every possible contingency (always excepting his own death) carefully considered and provided for; every advantage, even to minute details whereof not one man in a thousand would have dreamed, thought out and turned to the utmost account; moral effects calculated with astounding precision, and a victory gained without apparent difficulty and at trifling cost of life. Yet even so we do not possess the secret of

his success. "I landed a small force at Valdivia and captured the forts. I took my boats alongside the *Esmeralda* and cut her out." Such is, to all intent, Dundonald's account of these affairs. It is as though Raphael should say that he formed the conception of the Sistine Madonna and painted the picture, or Shakespeare, that he was struck by the story of Hamlet and wrote the play. Raphael shows us his brush, Shakespeare his pen, Dundonald his sword, but we are none the wiser. Nevertheless, we are able to deduce from his practice some broad statement of his principles, and the clue thereunto is to be found in his fondness for a night attack. His assault was based always as much on moral as on physical force; and he therefore chose the time when human vitality is at its lowest, and human apprehension at its liveliest. He aimed not so much at compassing destruction as in creating panic; not, so to speak, so much at beating men as in deluding them into the notion that they were beaten. The hauling down of the Spanish flag on the *Gamo* is an exact and concise summary of his system. For the rest, mystery and deception in his preparations, rapidity and suddenness in his execution, were the resources upon which he principally relied. Very early in his career we find him disguising the *Speedy* as a Danish brig, and lamenting, above all things, when the *Gamo* was sold out of the service, that such a means of deception should have been denied to him. Later on, in the Chilian War, we find him perpetually entering Spanish ports under false colours, now personating an American frigate, now representing a reinforcement expected from Spain, the time being always happily chosen, so that his disguise might not be suspected. More subtle than

this, and if the writer may express his own opinion, the most delicate of all his wiles, was the preparation of a duplicate set of fire-ships at Aix Roads, to be launched against the French on the very night when the arrival of a flotilla of still unequipped fire-ships had lulled them for twenty-four hours into false security. The plan, of course, was spoilt by the stupidity of Gambier, but remains none the less a beautiful conception. The despatch of half of his squadron from Callao on the eve of the attack on the *Esmeralda* furnishes another good example of the same kind. No man could show greater skill in disarming suspicion by a show of weakness. Nor was he less, nay rather more, resourceful when he designed not to soothe his enemy but to frighten him. The range of his invention in this province is amazingly wide, reaching from the paltriest schoolboy tricks to the most formidable engines of destruction. We begin with the blackening of the men's faces for the capture of the *Gamo*, a common practice with the German Reiters in the dawn of the renaissance of the art of war. We pass next to the construction of the swift galley which was carried by the *Pallas*, this last a perfectly straightforward weapon. Then comes the delightful scene with the corvettes in the Garonne; and then the attack in Aix Roads, headed by an engine designed at once to spread destruction and panic. The reputation which he gained in this affair lasted him for his whole life. On no subsequent occasion, in spite of many attempts, did he achieve success with explosion-vessels or fire-ships, but he never lost his fearful character as a wielder of infernal weapons; and he knew it and traded on it. A kindled tar-barrel

launched by any hand but his was a tar-barrel and no more, but by the mere presence of El Diablo it became endued with Satanic properties. If he wanted to keep the Spanish ships quiet in Callao while he went away, he made a sham attack on them, which kept them trembling under the batteries for weeks. Then we come to the nocturnal visit of the *Pedro Primeiro* to the Portuguese fleet at Bahia, a ghastly and awful apparition which comes silently up a river never before navigated by a line-of-battle ship at night, and as silently returns, the time, as usual, carefully chosen while the Admiral and his officers are ashore dancing. It was a fine feat of pilotage, but an ideal stroke of tactics. Finally, as a crowning achievement, comes the superb game of brag played at Maranham. It is truly said of Napoleon that he had generally half beaten his enemy before the battle began; and that he was conscious of his power and counted on it is shown by his vexation when Moore, refusing to bow to it, made a dash at his communications. Wellington also could take advantage of his prestige, and reckon on the shouts of his men at Sauroren to create hesitation in Soult. But we question if even Napoleon did more in action by the magic of his name than Dundonald.

These considerations should not, however, blind us to his tactical and strategical excellence. The gist of the action between the *Speedy* and the *Gamo* lies in the skill wherewith he brought his little ship so close to the frigate's sides that the Spanish guns could not be depressed to hull her. The combat against the *Minerve*, though accident robbed him of his victory, was successful in virtue of his superior skill in manœuvring. In

his one fleet-action, that against the Portuguese, he cut the enemy's line in two, and bade fair to capture four or five ships without difficulty. Lastly, the operations in pursuit of the Portuguese fleet from Bahia are a tactical masterpiece. Turning for a moment to his minor exploits ashore we find him as often manœuvring as driving the French out of their batteries; destroying the roads about Barcelona with a soldier's insight and an engineer's skill, and defending Rosas with much more than an engineer's ingenuity. Passing next to operations on a larger scale, we find him always aiming at the vital spot, wasting no energy, and squandering no strength. With a single frigate he keeps a French division of troops in check on the French coast, and seizes Rosas as the key to the capture of Barcelona. He then propounds a complete scheme of harassing operations on an enemy's coast, and in South America carries it out. There, as usual, he strikes only at vital points; it is only when driven to desperation by San Martin that he abandons the attack on Lima for a moment in order to capture Valdivia, which, after all, was the principal Spanish stronghold. In Greece, again, he sees into the heart of the matter at once. By cutting through the Turkish communications landward to the north, the siege of Athens must perforce be raised; and by destroying the expedition prepared to reinforce the Turks from Alexandria and commanding the sea, the enemy's force in Greece must perforce be isolated. Tactical and strategical skill served no less than moral force to secure him a series of great victories, which are for nothing so remarkable as for their bloodlessness. The capture of the *Esmeralda* and of Valdivia in

Chili, and the expulsion of the Portuguese fleet and army from Brazil, cost him altogether no more than eighteen men killed and forty-nine wounded. As a last instance of his strategic insight let us, in view of past and present controversies, quote two pregnant sentences on the defence of this kingdom. "The true fortification of England is always to be in a position to strike the first blow at sea, the moment it may be necessary." "The true strength of the navy is trained men." We have heard and read much on this subject of late, but nothing that is not summed up in these two terse aphorisms. Yet we do not remember ever to have observed open reference to the authority of the great Dundonald.

Lastly, let us look at the man in the place where we love best to see him, on his own quarterdeck. First let us notice that he was a consummate master of seamanship, and recognised as such by the first seamen of his time. His handling of the *Speedy*, of the *Pallas*, and of the *Pedro Primeiro*, when chased by a multitude of hostile ships, are fine examples of his power; but a still more delicate instance of his readiness has been preserved by the biographer of Sir Jahleel Brenton, himself a superb seaman. The *Imperieuse* and the *Spartan* (Brenton's ship), had landed parties to blow up some batteries on the French shore, and were meanwhile moving slowly up the coast at the rate of about three knots an hour, when suddenly Cochrane observed from the masthead a body of French cavalry galloping forward towards a gorge to cut off the retreat of his men. Without a moment's hesitation he gave the order to let go the anchor; the frigate spun rapidly

round, and thus brought her starboard broadside to enfilade the gorge, and thereby check the advance of the cavalry. Such *finesse* of seamanship can only be appreciated truly by seamen, but it is likely on that very account to have made greater impression on those that sailed with him than many of his more dazzling achievements. But Dundonald was always worshipped by his men. Without the delight in their individual peculiarities which we find in Marryat, he had an intense feeling and love for them, sympathised with their grievances, watched over their comfort, and, above all, treasured their lives. Yet he was a strict disciplinarian, and no mere seeker after popularity. He resisted all attempts to abolish flogging in the navy, maintaining that the power to inflict the punishment was indispensable to discipline. On one occasion, too, he fearlessly took upon himself the most awful responsibility that can be imposed upon a captain. A marine of the *Imperieuse* had fallen overboard during a heavy gale, but being a strong swimmer managed to keep himself afloat in a raging sea, and to wave his hand to show where he was. The men on board, of course, were preparing in all haste to lower a boat, when the captain came forward. They saw him look at the sea and compress his lips, and then he countermanded the boat by the words "Hold fast," and ejaculating, "Poor fellow!" walked silently aft. He would not risk half a dozen lives to save one. Dundonald is not, of course, by any means the only captain who has shown this extremity of moral courage, but he is one of the few who has done so without forfeiting the confidence of his men. Marryat, who witnessed the scene, never

quite got over it to his dying day; and we may well doubt whether he would have hesitated to condemn the action in any other man. But Dundonald is justified, not only by his habitual care of his sailors, but by his own amazing personal bravery. Marryat, himself the most gallant of men, says outright that he was the bravest man whom he ever saw. Moreover, Dundonald's was the bravery that inspires others to deeds beyond their own courage. When Marryat, fresh from the perilous duty of kindling the port-fires of his explosion-vessel in Aix Roads, returned to the *Imperieuse*, he found the frigate in immediate danger of destruction by a fire-ship which, prematurely lighted and clumsily handled, was drifting straight down upon her. "Mr. Mildmay" (Marryat), said the captain (Cochrane), "you seem to like the fun; jump into your gig again, take four fresh hands, and put her head the right way." The fire-ship was in flames from stem to stern, but Marryat went (very reluctantly, as he admits), did as he was bid, and returned half-suffocated, black as a coal, and so parched that he could not speak. Now-adays he would have received a Victoria Cross (the second that he would have won on that night); but in those days he was well content with Cochrane's "Very well done, Mildmay. Did you find it warm?" For Cochrane would have done the job single-handed if all others had refused. So, too, when the *Imperieuse* was making her raids on the French coast, Cochrane sent his boats ashore to destroy a battery. They returned to report that the enterprise was impracticable. "Well, Jack," said Cochrane to his coxswain, "do *you* think it impossible to blow up that battery?" "No, my lord,"

answered the coxswain and a chorus of voices; "we can do it if *you* go." Cochrane jumped into a boat, and rowing ashore with his party carried the battery in a moment. Even finer than this was the voyage to Valdivia in the sinking *O'Higgins;* and perhaps grandest of all the final cruise in search of the Spanish frigates with the unseaworthy *Valdivia*, and the yet more unseaworthy flagship.

In truth, with all his faults, he was a great man, a great commander, and a very great seaman. The fame of Nelson overshadows all others in British naval history, but as a naval genius Nelson himself stands hardly higher than Dundonald; and had not his pugnacious and undisciplined disposition made his worst enemies out of his own countrymen, the name of Dundonald might now be coupled with Nelson's in the hearts of all Englishmen. But his greatest work was done under an alien flag, and his narrative of his life's service is but the text for many pages of angry complaint and bitter reproach. The lustre of his actions is dimmed by the unlovely setting of his indignation; but when the memory of his wrongs, his misfortunes, and his faults shall have perished, then it will be seen that the nation did well to choose for his burial-place the great Abbey, "that temple of silence and reconciliation where the enmities of twenty generations lie buried," to lay him there at last to rest, a hero among heroes, a mighty King of the Sea.

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